



GUIDE to JORDAN



**Guide
to
Jordan**

GUIDE TO JORDAN

by

Franciscan Fathers



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•rd edition

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FOREWORD

The basic material of this handy guide-book was first published by Fr. Eugene Hoade, ofm., in 1954 under the title East of the Jordan, and was reprinted in 1966. To update it, a revised edition was put forth by Fr. Claudio Baratto, ofm., in 1979 with the new title Guide to Jordan, and reprinted in 1982.

Out of date once more, we, with the able assistance of Fr. Michele Piccirillo, ofm., and of Fr. Halim Noujaim, ofm., are pleased to publish this latest edition so as to meet the growing interest of tourists in this beautiful land enriched by many noteworthy historical sites.

the Publisher

ABBREVIATIONS

AASOR — Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research.

ADAJ — Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan.

BA — The Biblical Archaeologist.

BASOR — Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research.

JPOS — Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society.

LA — Liber Annuus, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

MD — Le Moniteur Diocésain.

PEQ — Palestine Exploration Quarterly.

QDAP — Quarterly of the Département of Antiquities in Palestine.

RB — Revue Biblique.

TS — La Terra Santa.

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INTRODUCTION

There are so many things of joy and beauty to be enjoyed over this big expanse of sown and desert, but which have no place in the book itself, that I call attention to them by way of introduction.

Going along, for example, the Wadi Shu'eib in springtime, one feels that nature has become wanton in her riot of colours. The red, white and pink oleanders run for ever along this pleasant tumbling stream: the roadside sparkles with the anemone, the poppy, the wild cyclamen, the phlox, the ranunculus, and suddenly the whole mountain side seems a liquid red and blue as the scarlet anemones push their lovely heads beneath the waving bluish lupines.

The Giant Fennel is luscious green, while the white Allium (*Tomet er Ra'i* — Shepherd's Garlic) is a mass of snowy white. The rough blue Anchusa (*Humhum*) brings beauty in numbers, while the Hedge Mustard (*Hardal*) adds to nature's favourite colour, yellow. The air is heavy with the scent of the tiny wild stock. Every lover of nature, and who is not? would love to linger on these mountain sides and discover for oneself the beautiful wild flowers of these Bible Lands: the Desert Storksbill (*Tummeir*) with its grey green leaves and pink flowers, the Purple Storksbill (*Ibret el Ajuz* — the Old Lady's Needle), the wild tulip, the purple and white iris, which surely must be the lily of the field, the modest daisy, the ranks of asphodels, the sweet scented white and yellow Melyots (*Handaqoq*) known to us as Honey Lotus, while a cluster of Henna flowers is fragrance itself. Long after these have passed the White Broom (*Retem*) hangs down its white strands.

The scene has changed. You mount the plateau in the dry summer months: sterile

wadis, hot granite crags baking in the Eastern sun, away and beyond the plains of sand and gravel radiating heat your eye is attracted by a single forlorn tree, which promises pleasant shade. Yet these mountains, amid the arid waste and desolation, slashed by barren wadis and baked in merciless heat, constitute a fascinating world in themselves, of strange fantastic shapes, of rainbow colours, of peaks and depressions twisted and contorted by the giant hand of nature. Look down on the gorge of Zarka Ma'in. Stand on the edge of the Arnon depression. Gaze out over the mountains of Dana, and you will see and feel what words cannot express.

You advance into the semi-desert lands, which look as if they had been stoned to death and the lethal weapons are all about. The wide open spaces of the desert lie before you. There are those who can see no beauty in the desert: to them it is barren of interest; it is sand, sand, and occasionally varied by more sand. Such have my sympathy, for there are those who love the desert, find delight in the wonderful gradations of colouring, dun against the cloudless sky; feel the sensation of infinite space, the wide open limitless stretches of the desert. As our transport crunches on the tiny white shells of the landsnails, you sense that freedom of travel which asphalted roads can never bring. No jay-walkers here to use your brakes on, nothing but the crested lark, or the great purple shadow of a griffon-vulture or a lanner-falcon swooping over the wide expanse to the terror of bird and beast. If luck is yours a herd of deer may scamper across your path and you wonder on what they feed. And there are those who love to chase them across the desert plains.

Then the strange thing happens: suddenly you are no longer in the desert, for before yours eyes rise images of beauty, which alas! are unreal. The startling mirage, shifting with magic play, expands in gleaming blue lakes,

whose cool shores are lined with paving groves and on whose mimic waves float boats both great and small. You begin to doubt your senses and feel that your imagination is running away with you. The desert swims in a maddening, dancing mirage that mirrors lakes and islets, where you know there is only sand! As you advance the vision recedes, dissolves, combines again into new forms, all fancifully beautiful. Then it slowly fades and leaves but the burning horizon, upon which a dim black-speck appears over the rolling sandy swell like a ship far out at sea: as it approaches the desert gives it gigantic dimensions: it proves to be a camel, one of a herd which roams, feeding on the scanty scrub the badlands produce.

Nobody is ever tired of seeing or hearing stories about camels. Like the donkey, it has borne the brownman's burden for so long that legends have grown up around it, except that its association with the lofty silence and spaces of timeless and measureless deserts has raised its status above that of the little ass which so often leads a train of supercilious camels. Ship of the desert, noble caravanner of Arabia, humped ruminant, bearer of a contemptuous expression and possessor of unpleasant eructatory habits, yet an interesting animal, if unshapely. Its triple compartment stomach and soft-soled feet have carried it to the romantic plane where scimitars flash or fabulous cavalcades of merchants bring musk and aromatic spices. Alas! that day is gone and with it much of the glamour that was the camel's. And we are the poorer for it. The tinkling of the camel bell is rapidly being silenced, the heavily laden, light treading, eternally chewing camel and the solemn sad-looking meek little donkey are being pushed aside: the songs of their drivers and the sweet sounds of the flute are growing faint. Yet east of the Jordan the camel is still at home.

To the school books we owe the mistake that a dromedary is a camel with two humps. A dromedary is to the camel what a thoroughbred is to a cart-horse, a swifter specimen of the same genus, as the Greek word implies. The two-humped camel belongs to Tibet. The camel, as we know it, is certainly the camel of the Bible, of which we first hear as part of a present which Abraham received from Pharaoh (Gn 12, 16), and which next appears as in use among the Ismaelites coming from Gilead across the Jordan on their way to Egypt, carrying spices, balm and myrrh (Gn 37, 25)¹.

Wherever you meet the camel, it never ceases to fascinate although it fails to charm, and it is always a decoration in a world of great spaces and simple requirements. It is an interesting souvenir to have yourself photographed on the hump of a camel, but if you wish to appreciate the simple comforts of life later, try riding one for a whole day. Beauty and comfort alike are relative, but the felicity provided by the softness of the desert sand can best be appreciated after a few hours on a camel's hump.

You roll across the desert by day. Over all the heaven above, over all the earth beneath, there is no visible power that can baulk the fierce will of the sun. "Hath rejoiced as a giant to run the way. His going out is from the end of heaven, and his circuit even to the end thereof and there is no one that can hide himself from his heat" (Ps 19). Everywhere is apparent the terrible and triumphant power of the sun upon the wide spaces of sterility and

¹ Camels were not in general use in Egypt before the Greco-Roman period, but they were known before 3,000 B.C. Albright (in the *Archaeology of Palestine* p. 200) thinks that the mention of them here is anachronistic, which is not so, for they were brought into Egypt by traders (Gn 37, 25), and were a suitable gift for a nomad Sheikh like Abraham.

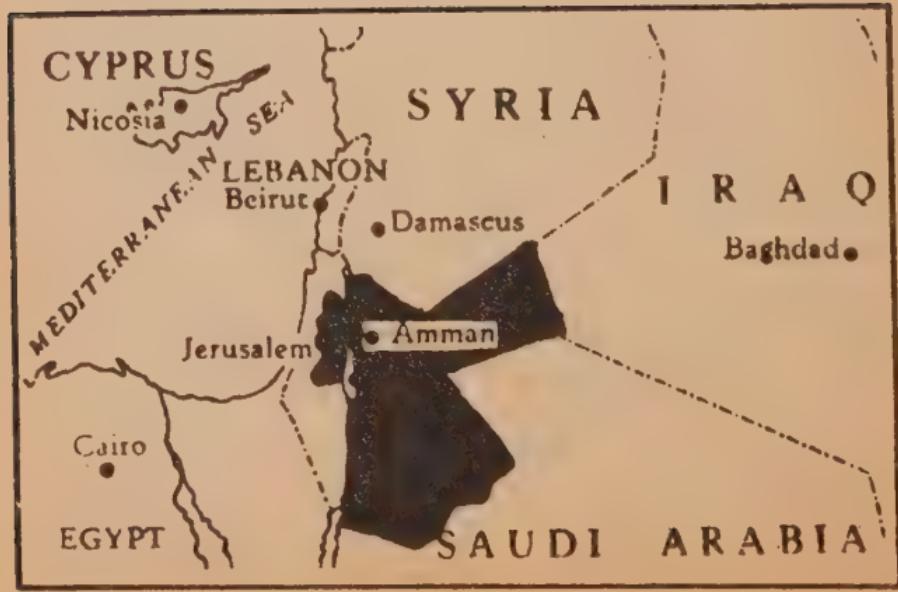
death, like that of a despot over a realm blighted by his destructive sway.

The fierce orb goes meekly down to set in a cloudless west. The darkness deepens quickly, the mighty golden moon pops up from the eastern horizon and the traveller who is spending the night abroad finds himself in that most beautiful, awe-inspiring, tranquilizing place the sons of man can know, the desert on a moon lit night under the stars. Nothing moves. One may hear, as it were, the solemn pulsation of the universe. Talk in such an atmosphere is rude. Night conceals a world but reveals a universe,

*"Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, when we are least alone".*

At such a moment one may hope to fathom the lives of those who live all their days and nights in such surroundings, perhaps even discover why princes left their palaces to retire a little to such a world. "For I will behold Thy heavens, the works of Thy fingers: the moon and the stars which Thou hast founded". Those immense badlands, with their heat by day, their cold by night, are so imperious in what they do to men and allow so little that men can do for themselves, that they beget a profound sense of dependence on superhuman powers. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man that Thou visited him?" Is it any wonder that the expression ever in the mouth and heart of the Bedouin is: *Min Allah: It is from God.* Could it be but that? One is so utterly at the mercy of powers not his own, as between what God does and what man can do, man's efforts is nothing and God's is everything.

Such and much more from the desert.



Geopolitical Outline

The area covered in this little guide book is the portion of the Jordan Kingdom that was originally known as Transjordan. It is the land lying east of the River Jordan from the Yarmuk in the north to the Gulf of 'Aqaba in the south and stretching eastward into the Arabian Desert to the frontiers of Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The total area is about 90,000 square kms of which no less than 80 per cent is steppe and desert. The length from north to south is 380 kms and its width varies from 150 kms at its narrowest to 380 kms at its broadest.

It is in great part a great limestone plateau varying in altitude from 460 to 1,525 m above sea level with its highest peak 1,856 metres. To the west the plateau ends with the abrupt edge of the great rift valley, which constitutes the Jordan Valley, Dead Sea basin and Wadi 'Araba. The edge is cut by many short valleys in which are perennial streams. When viewed from Jerusalem for example, it has the appearance of a range of mountains. To the east it fades away gradually into the desert, known in history as the Syrian Desert.

Geology and Topography

In order to appreciate the physical features of the area, it is desirable to have an idea of the geology of the region. In early geological time, the area was sometimes dry land and sometimes covered by the sea. The land was mainly desert, and sandstones, such as those from which Petra has been carved, were formed. When the seas spread far into what is now Arabia, limestones, chalks and marls were deposited. The last retreat of the seas occurred in Oligocene times, some 40 million years ago.

A vast plateau emerged from the retreating seas; it was featureless, with no deep valleys, and extended from the present Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. In the Lower Miocene (some 30 million years ago), the Jordan Valley was formed by the sinking of a long narrow segment of the earth's crust. This sinking of the valley, or rift, was accompanied by an uprising of the land on either side, by some folding of the strata and by the outpouring of molten basaltic lava. The Jordan Valley forms but a small portion of the sunken valley or rift; the great Rift extends from northern Syria via the Orontes Ghab, the Lebanon Bekka, the plan of Houle, Lake Tiberias, the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea, the Wadi Araba and the Gulf of 'Akaba away down into East Africa, a total length of some 5,000 kilometres.

In Jordan, much of the Rift Valley lies below sea-level. The surface of Lake Tiberias is at minus 212-209 metres and that of the Dead Sea is at minus 932 metres; the valley between Lake Tiberias and the Dead Sea is the Ghor proper. The lowest point in the rift lies beneath the northern portion of the Dead Sea, at the lake bottom. South of the Dead Sea, the land rises gently, to reach sea-level and then divides at 240 metres above sea-level from which the Wadi 'Araba slopes to the sea at 'Akaba.

The great difference in level between the sunken block of the Jordan Valley and the uplifted plateaux on either side has produced conditions favourable for heavy and rapid erosion. The rivers and streams flowing into the Rift have cut back into the plateau, carving out spectacular gorges and valleys, and pouring their load of sediment into the Jordan Valley, which for much of its geological history has been a huge lake. But the valley was not filled, for it has continued to sink in irregular jerks, since its first formation. Each downward drop has given rise to an earthquake. Such movements have continued into historical time; the 1927 earthquake, which did much damage in Amman, is attributed to a movement of the Jordan Valley.

The erosion of the elevated plateau by the rivers which flow into the Jordan, the Dead Sea, the Wadi 'Araba and the Gulf of 'Akaba has produced "The Hill Region" and "The High Plateau" described hereafter. The hills are really remnants of the old plateau, and the high relief is caused by the deep dissection. Further east of the Jordan Valley, the old plateau remains, with shallow, wide wadis draining eastwards. The boundary between the two types of topography is roughly marked by the Hijaz Railway, which skirts the deep wadis to avoid steep gradients and expensive bridges. The Haisma Region in the south is caused by erosion into the Gulf of 'Akaba, which has been going on for longer than the erosion into the Jordan Valley and Dead Sea. The Wadi Sirhan may be a smaller type of rift structure, but has not been closely studied¹.

Physically the area may be divided into well defined sub-regions:

1) *The Ghor Region*, which lies below sea level. The climate is subtropical; the July

¹ Cfr. E. J. Burden, *Handbook of the Geology of Jordan*, for these details.

temperature is always over 38°C and the January temperature rarely falls below 9°C. Rainfall is scanty, seldom exceeding 200 millimetres a year. Many small rivers flow into the Ghor from the plateau, but some of them are lost in the Dead Sea.

2) *The Hill Region*, really the high edge of the plateau. This is broad in the north and narrow and high in the south. Between the Yarmuk and the Wadi Zarqa lie the mountains of Ajlun, the ancient Gilead. Between the Zarqa and Wadi Mujib are found the mountains of Balqa, the biblical mountains of Ammon to the east, and of Moab, but held by the Amorites for a time. Between the Mujib and Wadi el Hasa lie the mountains of Karak, and also the esh Sharâ Hills. This is the highest region of the country and where the many flourishing towns are situated. Here lie Irbid, Ajlun, Salt, Madaba, Karak and Tafila. The Hill Region is cold in winter and snow is common especially in January. The summer is hot, becoming more so as one moves eastward. The mean maximum is around 33°C. Rainfall increases with height and decreases with the eastward slope of the country.

3) *The High Plateau*, lying between the Hill Region and the desert region, is roughly bounded to the east by the Hijaz Railway. Apart from the wadis, the height of the region is nowhere less than 800 metres or more than 1,220 metres. Amman, the capital, the largest and most important town in the country, is in this area as also Mafraq and Ma'an. The temperature is much the same as in the Hill Region, but not so extreme.

4) *The Haisma Region*, bounded by the esh Sharâ Hills in the north and northeast, the Wadi 'Araba in the west, and the Gulf of 'Aqaba in the south is a sandy area with little agriculture. The port of 'Aqaba on the Red Sea, the country's only approach to the sea,

lies in this area. It has a very scanty rainfall and extreme temperatures.

5) *The Steppe and Desert Region*, an arid zone, covering the whole eastern part of the country, where apart from the major oases of el Azraq and el Jafr, only small springs, as Bayir, Khabra Ghada, el Hisna and Hausa are found. The wadis in this region are sometimes flooded for several days a year and thus provide water which raises enough grass to maintain the goats, sheep and camels of the scanty nomadic population. The area has extreme temperatures and very scanty rainfall, always less than 100 millimetres a year.

6) *Wadi Sirhan*, most of which is below 300 metres in height, forms the eastern boundary of the country. The valley, running from northwest to southeast, receives the waters of hundreds of wadis from both sides. Along the wadi are many perennial springs which are the life of the nomads and their flocks.

Though the climate is of the Mediterranean type, with hot dry summers and cold wet winters, there are remarkable variations due to distance from the sea, altitude, latitude and exposure to the desert. The winds are the regular westerlies, but at the seasonal changes one may expect the Khamsin or Sirocco from the southwest, bringing with it a mist of fine sand and producing langour and fever; and the Sherkiyah from the east which is cold and painful. In general the climate is not very stormy nor very variable, due to the fact, perhaps, that climatically it is a transitional area between the Mediterranean and the Desert types.

Rivers

The rivers do not have a large water output. The *Jordan* is a weird river: from source to mouth it has a fall of 1,310 metres, and is always well below the level of the surrounding country. Though the width seldom exceeds 30

metres and is fordable in many places, during the rainy season it overflows its banks and in parts is one kilometre wide. The *Yarmuk* which forms part of the boundary with Syria is 40 kms long, and flows into the Jordan. The *Zarqa*, a long meandering stream, also flows into the Jordan. The River *Shu'eib* is perennial, but except in the rainy season, it is consumed for irrigation before it reaches the Jordan. Flowing into the Dead Sea, beside Jordan, are *Zarqa Ma'in*, the *Mujib*, *Wadi el Karak*, and *Wadi el Hasa* and many smaller ones. East of the Hill Region there are hundreds of water-courses which are dry during most of the year.

Administrative Divisions

The country is divided into 5 districts known as *Muhafazahs* (wards). Amman, Irbid Balqa, Karak, Ma'an. Amman city and the district around is known as *Muhafazah al 'Asmeh* (Ward of the Capital). A *Muhafazah* may have as sub-divisions, a *Liwa* under a *Mutassarif* (Governor), a *Qadha* (*Qaza*) under a *Mudir*, and a *Nahiya*. A number of localities lying within the territorial divisions are organized as municipalities or village councils. Localities not so organized are administered through a village headman known as a *mukhtar*.

The Bedouins are divided into the north, central and south Bedouin. They are partially administered by the Desert Police Force, and each division has a representative in Parliament.

Flag

The flag of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is composed of 3 rectangular colour pieces, the upper piece is black, the middle white and the lower green. At the end, adjacent to the flagstaff a red triangular piece is fixed, the point of which touches the middle of the vertical and horizontal dimensions. Inside the triangular piece is a 7 pointed star, white

in colour. The colours come from the different Arab rulers' flags since the rise of Islam.

Population

The geographical distribution of the population reflects the pattern of the rainfall resulting in a concentration of the people in the northwest corner of the country. Rainfall also results in the division of the country into desert and sown areas. Nomads inhabit the desert and steppe-country leading to the highlands. The settled population falls into two categories, rural and urban. The rural dwells in villages, the urban in towns and cities.

The nomadic are the bedouin (Arabic *badi'ah*, inhabitants of the desert) of the desert who live during the summer in the uplands and plains and move during the rainy season into the eastern desert and the Wadi 'Araba.

Pure nomads — an entirely pastoral people of no fixed residence — are few to-day: most are only semi-nomads, having been begun to cultivate the land and keep flocks of sheep, goats and camels.

At the end of 1972 the Statistical Year Book gives the population as 1,774,000, divided accordingly

Amman District	1,000,000
Balqa	114,000
Irbid	506,000
Karak	92,000
Ma'an	62,000

Mineral Resources

The region is not rich in metallic deposits, while of non-metallic minerals only phosphates exist in quantity.

Phosphate deposits, after an extensive geological survey, extend from north of Amman to south of Ma'an, some of whose are exploited at Ruseifa and Hasa.

Building stone and cement are produced in quantities that permit export. The economic

feasibility of the exploitation of copper, manganese, iron, sulphur and other mineral deposits is being studied.

Since Jordan has such supplies of phosphates and potash, it is possible, given the necessary capital, that the country could produce on the spot potassium metaphosphate, the fertilizer of the future. The third major element, nitrogen, is one raw material every country has: it is all around us in the air: the problem is to extract it and that problem has been solved.

Minerals in solution in the Dead Sea: An estimate of the quantities found in the Dead Sea which contains 159 cubic kilometres of water is:

Millions of Tons

Magnesium chloride	22,000
Sodium chloride	11,000
Calcium chloride	6,000
Potassium chloride	2,000
Magnesium bromide	980

Potash is used in the manufacture of fertilizers, gunpowder, drugs, paint, soap, glass, dyes, paper, etc. Bromide is used in photography and medicine, in car engines, dyes and gas bombs. Sodium chloride is common salt. Magnesium chloride is employed in the textile and chemical industries. Calcium chloride is very abundant and of little use.

The Arab Potash Company was established in 1956 with the object of extracting potash from the Dead Sea; detailed studies and projects have been done and its implementation is well under way.

Metallic Minerals. Iron ore deposits exist in the Zarqa and Ajlun regions, and south of Petra, but only in small quantities. Copper exists between Safi and Feinan: the visible ores were exhausted in former times. Manganese ore, in small quantities, in Wadi Dana. Ochre and alum occur in Zarqa Ma'in and Dana.

Kaolin and Ochre are found in Mahis. Ochre and alum occur in Zarqa Ma'in and near Jarash, again in very small quantities. Many of the rocks associated with the crystalline mass of 'Aqaba area contain pyrites.

Non-Metallic Minerals. The Phosphate deposits are the greatest mineral asset, if we exclude the minerals of the Dead Sea. They are found in the vicinity of Amman, Salt, El Hasa and especially near Er Ruseifa. Pure gypsum is found in Wadi el Hasa, Wadi Karak and Wadi Zarqa. Bitumen is found mainly near the Mujib, but also all along the shores of the Dead Sea. Deposits of bituminous limestone are widespread in the centre and north. There are strong indications of the presence of petroleum, especially at 'Ain Umma south of Wadi Mujib.

Other *Non-Metallic Minerals* includes stone for building, marble, rock-salt at Qasr el Azraq, limestone and clay suitable for cement making.

Mineral Springs

Zarqa Ma'in. This is the largest hot spring in the area. It issues from basaltic rock about 4 kms up the Zarqa Ma'in wadi. The saline constituents of the water are chiefly sodium and calcium chloride and magnesium bromide, but it is also sulphurous. The temperature is 55.5° to 60° C.

'Ain ez Zara. About 5 kms south of the mouth of Wadi Zarqa Ma'in is the spring area of Zara, a group of thermal springs of the sulphurous saline type.

El Machruk. Beside el Machruk village, near the mouth of the Nahr el Zarqa, a small spring said to be chalybeate.

East of the Jordan River are '*Ain el Hammam*, suitable for drinking; '*Ain Suweima*, rich in lime; and *Wadi Hamara* which contains lime, iron and manganese.

In the Lisan Peninsula are *Hammam el Maghara* (a sulphurous spring) and '*Ain Sbeh* (a ferrous spring).

Over a mile northeast of Khirbet Fahil (Pella) is a hot spring in Wadi Hammeh which is much frequented by the local people for its curative properties.

The thermal springs of Pella itself are no longer apparent.

Natural Vegetation

Although centuries of neglect and deforestation have resulted in the disappearance of large forest areas, the country has yet some small forests.

The main forest regions are: 1) Jebel Ajlun, 2) Ardash al Abbad, north of Salt, 3) Aluk and Howeiseh, southeast of Jarash, 4) Beni Hamideh, northwest of Karak, 5) Feinan, southwest of Tafila, and 6) Heisheh in the Ma'an district between Wadi Musa and Shaubak.

The most important trees are a number of varieties of oak with pines and olives in the Ajlun area. Here and there are carob trees, and in the Jordan valley poplars and tropical trees are found.

Agricultural Resources

Cereals. Wheat and barley as winter crops, and dura in summer.

Legumes and Vegetables. Kersenneh, vetch, lentils, peas and beans: eggplant, tomatoes, cucumber, marrow, etc.

Fruit: In the hill area grapes are produced in quantity, consumed fresh or as raisins, wine and araq¹. Olives are grown, mostly in the north. Other fruits are: pomegranates, almonds, apricots, figs, quinces, plums. Bananas, and citrus fruits are grown extensively in the Jordan valley.

¹ Goodrich - Freer claims that the familiar raisin called *Sultana*, should be *Saltana*, as originating in Salt (*In a Syrian Saddle* p. 156).

Tobacco, first planted in 1926, is now a valuable crop, including Turkish tobacco, heisheh.

Sesame and sumach leaves are also grown.

Attempts are now being made to grow cotton at different points in the Jordan Valley.

Juncus, a weed or rush which may be suitable for the manufacture of paper, exists in quantity.

Jubeiha Agricultural School, north of Amman, and the Khadouri Agricultural School (Tukarm) have been unified into the Hussein Agricultural College under the Ministry of Education. The Rabba Agricultural School was annexed to the Ministry of Education in 1961.

Livestock and Poultry

The animal wealth of the country is considerable: horses, mules, donkeys, camels, cattle, sheep, goats¹. Poultry keeping is carried on mainly in a primitive way. Beside hens, a small number of geese, ducks and turkeys.

Fauna

Wild animals are not plentiful. Small leopards, wolves, hyaenas, jackals and an odd fox are found. Martens, mongooses (the great enemy of poisonous snakes, but also of domestic fowls) and hares (not rabbits) are less common. The wild pig frequents the Jordan and Yarmuk valleys. Gazelles were numerous but hunting them in jeeps has, almost annihilated them². The ibex still exists in the hills

¹ The goat is the curse of the country, and the Government is trying to persuade the Bedouins to keep sheep instead. The wild ass was known as late as 1920.

² At one time both the Arabian and Dorcas gazelles were to be found everywhere. Also there was plenty of Oryx in the desert. Modern weapons and motors have annihilated them. The long horned Arabian Oryx, a white antelope, was the biblical *reêm*, the Assyrian *Rimū*, translated *unicorn* in the Bible (Is.

around the Dead Sea, Wild cats and coneys¹ are not infrequent. Hedgehogs, jerboas², porcupines, genets, polecats and badgers are still common. The ostrich, to be met with in Jabal Tubaiq until about 1932, has retreated into Saudi Arabia. The bear, seen until 1930, has retired to the Lebanon. The lion, still known in the Middle Ages is entirely extinct. The Emperor Decius (249-251) imported lions into the country from Africa and mention is often made of them. The lion is shown on the Madaba Map. Kinglake in *Eothen* (1835) thought he saw the foot prints of a lion and Libbey and Hoskins in *The Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea* (1905) were also of the same opinion. Had it been a lion we should have heard more about it. The Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubata*) is now probably extinct.

Fisheries

The only fishing region are the few kms of coast at the Gulf of 'Aqaba, besides what river Jordan produces. In 'Aqaba fish abound in variety and size.

Industry

Although predominately an agricultural country, the development of the industrial sector has been impressive. Mining manufacturing

34, 7): compare Nb 23,22 and Dt 33,17 where it is the rhinoceros. The last was shot in Jordan about 1950. A desperate effort is now being made to save the Oryx from extinction in a desert reserve in Phoenix, Arizona. The R.V. translates reêm as *wild-ox*. and the new Confraternity as *bull*.

¹ The coney is the *Hyrax Syriacus*, also called the rock-badger.

² The jerboa has kangaroo - like hind legs with hairy toes, powerful teeth and jaw muscles with shovel - like head and this helps it to burrow very quickly. Jerboa is *Yarbô'a* in Hebrew and *Yarbû'* in Arabic (*Dipus aegyptius*).

and electricity have come to occupy an increasingly important position in the Jordanian economy.

Since 1954 a large cement factory, a petroleum refinery, a number of foundries, a tannery, several marble factories and an expanded phosphate mining plant have come into operation. Other industrial activities include milling, oil pressing, textiles, bottling, brewing, tobacco products, footwear, metal products, furniture, detergents, food products, batteries, glass, printing and publishing as well as many others.

The country possesses many archaeological remains and potential health resorts, which are properly handled and advertised. This little book is sufficient to show the truth of the above. A great deal has been done in the whole region as tourist centres and health resorts: better approach and care of the antiquity sites, correct road signs, good accommodation at the many wonderful hot spring.

A good road network relates the towns and main sites in the Kingdom.

There are four civilian airports: Amman, Mafraq, 'Aqaba and Ma'an.

Foreign aid

U.S.A. Foreign Operations Administration, formed in 1952, gave birth to the U.S. Agency for International Development to Jordan (USAID/J), called usually Point IV. Its aims:

- 1) Development of water resources.
- 2) Modernization of agricultural systems.
- 3) Expansion of the existing road network.
- 4) Remoulding of the educational and vocational training system.
- 5) Creation of Public Health and sanitation organization (against malaria and T.B.).
- 6) Foundation of an industrial economy.
- 7) Scientific exploitation of tourist possibilities.
- 8) Technical improvement of administrative policies.

- 9) Emergency relief to farmers in years of drought.
- 10) Foundation of a civic action programme.

Development of water sources

The most ambitious project is the *East Ghor Irrigation Project*. Begun in 1957, it is divided into 3 sections, each approximately 23 kms in length. The U.S.A. Government financed it and the *Imprese Venete*, an Italian firm, was responsible for the main canal: one km tunnel and 77 kms of concrete canal. Tracts of land have been distributed to new owners. The fertile valley, an "open air green house", adds much to the country's productivity.

The development of the water sources of the Jordan Valley was initiated in 1958 and by the end of 1973 the following items had been implemented:

- a. Partial diversion of the waters of the Yarmouk River to the East Ghor Canal to irrigate 11,000 dunums.
- b. Raising the sides of the East Ghor Canal to increase its capacity.
- c. Extension of the existing East Ghor Canal by 18 kms to irrigate an additional area of about 13,000 dunums.
- d. Construction of the Wadi Ziglab, Shueib and Kafraint dams with storage capacities of 4.3 cu mm, 2.3 cubic mm and 4.3 cubic mm respectively.
- e. The preparation and partial construction of the Khalid Dam. The dam was intended to have a storage capacity of 200 cubic mm and enough delivery to irrigate 200,000 additional dunums in the Jordan Valley. However, the 1967 war caused the project to come to a standstill.
- f. Construction of the King Talal Dam on the Zerka river for the conservation of about 50 cubic mms of water to feed the extension of a East Ghor Canal to irrigate about 35,000 dunums.

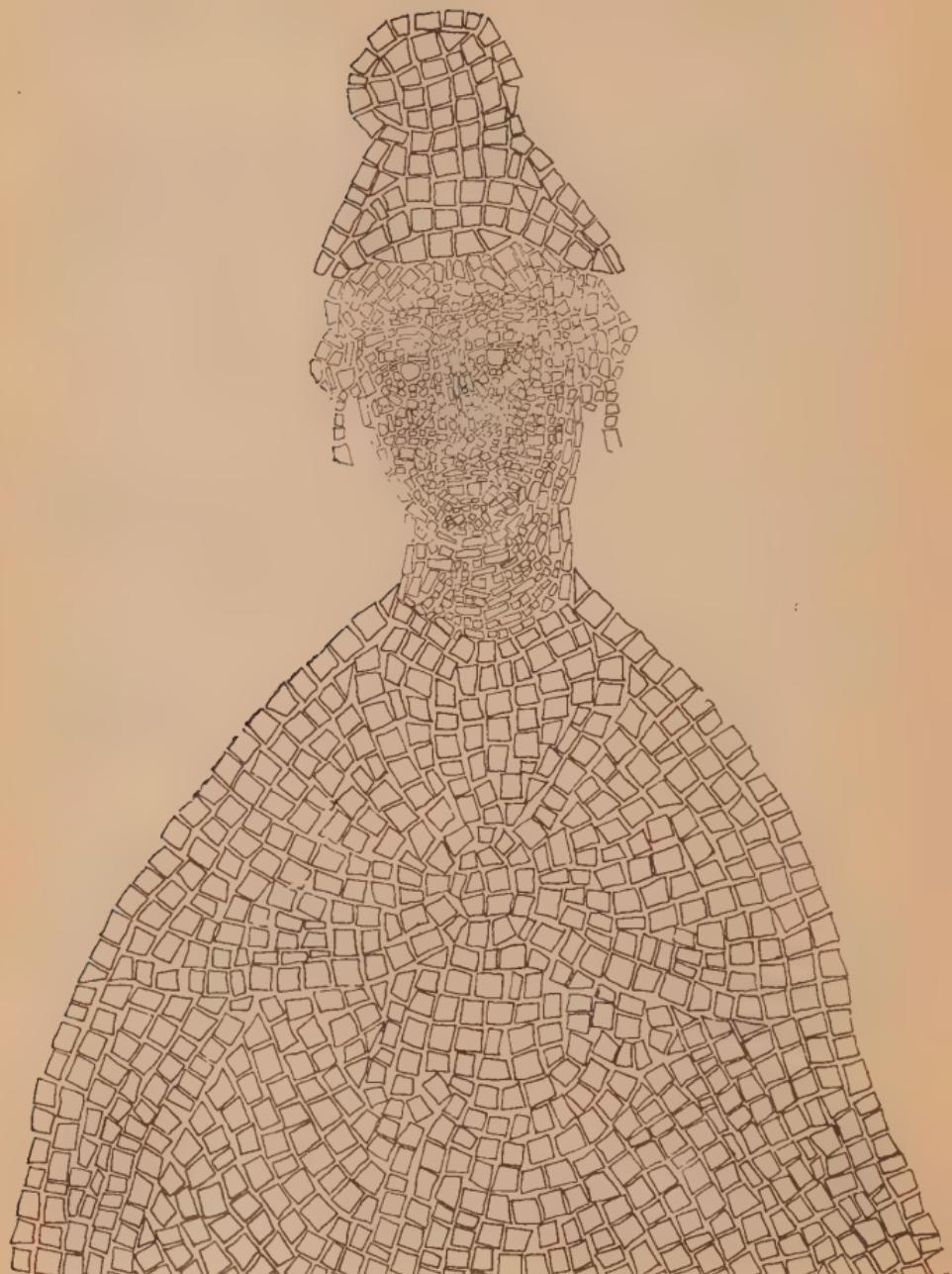
g. The introduction of the sprinkler system of irrigation in the Zerka triangle to irrigate about 12,000 dunums.

Suitable dam sites for the storage of surface water are relatively scarce in most of the Kingdom, and it is evident that the exploitation further agricultural development. The most of groundwater resources in the East Bank are the following :

1. The Jordan Valley with an estimated potential of 50 cubic mms per year.
2. The North-Eastern Plateau, the Azrak, Wadi Dhuleil and Amman Zerka fields with an estimated potential of about 110-150 cubic mms per year.
3. The South-Eastern Plateau, the Hasa, Shobak Jafr, Wadi Arja and Ram-Qadisi fields with a total potential of about 200-300 cubic mms per year.

Wadi Ziglab Dam was the first dam suggested by the McDonald and Partners (British) aerial geology and mapping of the East Bank of Jordan, completed in 1964. Other dams are under construction and consideration.

The *Central Water Authority* was established in 1960 to co-ordinate the development of the water resources of the whole country, and included building small storage dams in wadies, improving springs, renovating cisterns, village and municipal water projects and small irrigation systems. Many wells have drilled on both banks. In November 1962, reusing 175 kms of abandoned Iraq Petroleum Co. oil pipelines water was brought from Azraq to the northern district.



On Mount Nebo-Siyagha Fr Michele Piccirillo undertook the work of arrangement and of excavation interrupted by Fr Corbo, 1970. So during 1976 a marvellous mosaic was found in the northern room of the Basilica under a less significant mosaic of VI century. Here we show the young offspring of the zebra and the camel.

Archaeological Research

The Land beyond the Jordan has so far baffled a long line of explorers. To the strange charm of its limitless stretches and the beauty of its streams that tumble down its deep-cut gorges, there are added countless hills covered with dolmens, menhirs and rude block houses. Since written records are scanty, the archaeological remains are of greater interest.

While not wishing to belittle the ancient historians and pilgrims, e.g. Eusebius (265-340), St. Jerome (349-419), Egeria who visited in 385-388, Peter the Iberian (500) and Thietmar (1217) we here intend to list only some more modern scholars. The German Ulrich Jasper Seetzen of the Oriental Museum of Gotha discovered the ruins of Jarash and Amman in 1806-7. He was the first to explore Transjordan scientifically. His description, *A Brief Account of the Countries adjoining the Lake of Tiberias, the Jordan and the Dead Sea*, was published in London in 1813 by the Palestine Association formed with the object of procuring and publishing information on the geography, history and contemporary life in Palestine.

The Swiss, Jean Louis Burckhardt discovered Petra, 1810-12, and was the first to record Arabic place names correctly; his enthusiasm for Arabian exploration was so great that he became a Moslem, travelling as Sheikh Ibrahim. He was in Arabia while Mohammed Ali's armies were engaged in fighting the Wahhabis. The account of his travels, *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land*, was published in London in 1822. Two Englishmen, Irby and Mangles (*Travels in Egypt, Nubia, Syria, 1817-18*), discovered 'Iraq el Emir and made valuable archaeological observations. Much of what other scholars had discovered was first published by John Silk Buckingham (*Travels*

in Palestine and Travel among Arab Tribes 1816), but he deserves credit for his publication of the first plans of the ruins at Jarash and elsewhere. In 1828 Leon de Laborde and Linant (*Journey through Arabia Petraea*) added to our information. In 1838 the American Edward Robinson, with his friend and helper Eli Smith, began his research, which, with all its faults, is of importance. He was a leading pioneer in surface exploration: he published *Biblical Researches in Palestine* (1841) and *Later Researches in Palestine* (1856). In 1850-1 and 1863 de Saulcy explored and excavated in several places (*Narrative of a Journey round the Dead Sea and Journey in Bible Lands*), but "since his enterprise exceeded his knowledge and his vanity exceeded both" (Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine*, p. 2) he has little to show for his work. Another explorer was Rey (*Voyage dans le Haouran et aux bords de la Mer Morte*, 1857-58), followed by a more important group led by Luynes (*Voyage d'exploration à la Mer Morte, à Petra et sur la rive gauche du Jourdain* 1864).

In 1853 and 1862 Arthur P. Dean Stanley visited the country. His *Sinai and Palestine* (London 1856) was a most popular book, having 24 editions.

In August 1868 the Rev. Frederick Klein by chance came upon the Moabite (Mesha) Stone at Dhiban, the story of which we shall relate later.

In 1865 the Palestine Exploration Fund was established for the survey of Palestine.

In 1870 the American Palestine Exploration Society was founded. When it was recognized that both societies had the same object, it was agreed that the American Society be assigned the country east of the River Jordan. Two expeditions were actually sent out to survey the country, but they encountered so many obstacles and suffered such chronic shortage of funds that the project was finally abandoned with very little to show for it. Selah Merill

undertook several expeditions (1875) under the same auspices, but the result of his work is insignificant; it was published in *East of the Jordan* (London 1881). Later the American School of Oriental Research (founded in 1900) made good the promises of the earlier society.

In 1881 it was decided that the British Society should do for east of the Jordan what they had done for west of the Jordan. Major Conder with commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the Royal Engineers undertook the work. But the atmosphere, both local and international, was poor. The Turkish authorities were suspicious and the tribes restless. No sooner had the survey started than it was halted by the Governor of Es-Salt. Despite other interruptions the survey was completed in 1882. Only one volume, *The Survey of Eastern Palestine*, dealing with the 'Adwan Country was published.

Another project of exploration, pursued under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund, was a geological survey of Wadi 'Arabah. The leader was Prof. Hull, Director of the Geological Survey of Ireland. His party included his son as assistant, a botanist, a naturalist and a meteorologist. Kitchener was also attached to the party. The survey was done in 1883-4 and the results published in *The Geology and Geography of Arabia Petraea, Palestine and Adjoining Districts* (1886).

In 1872, H.B. Tristam, a member of the Palestine survey, visited the country and wrote *The Land of Moab*.

During these years a young Frenchman, Charles Clermont-Ganneau, made many brilliant discoveries on his own account. He recovered the famous Mesha Stone, and above all he exposed the sensational Moabite forgeries by a Jerusalem antiquities dealer, M.W. Shapira, which had deceived some of the most prominent specialists of Europe. Clermont-Ganneau later worked as agent of the Palestine

Exploration Fund (*Archaeological Researches in Palestine*).

In 1884 Gottlieb Schumacher, a member of the German Tempelgesellschaft in Palestine, an engineer, began working for the Ottoman Government on the survey of the railway line between Damascus and Haifa, and in 1885 the P.E.F. engaged him to make a map of areas not far from the projected railway. The result of his work was published in 1889 under the title of *Across the Jordan, an Exploration and Survey of parts of Hauran and Jaulan and Ajlun*. The volume contained an appendix by Laurence Oliphant on the *North-East of Lake Tiberias, in Jaulan*, and another by Guy Le Strange, *Ajlun and Belka*.

Another traveller was A. Herbert Percy who in 1896 wrote *Moab, Ammon, and Gilead*.

Shortly after Gautier published *Au-delà du Jourdain* (1896), and *Autour de la Mer Morte* (1901).

Three American expeditions led by Howard Crosby Butler in the years 1899-1900, 1904-5, and 1909 brought back extensive reports of the monuments and inscriptions that could be found without excavations in northern Transjordan and southern Syria (*American Archaeological Expedition in Syria in 1899-1900* and *Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria in 1904-5 and 1909*). The same task was performed very thoroughly by the Germans Brünnow and von Domaszewski (*Die Provincia Arabia*, I-III, 1904-9); they went farther south than the Americans, following the Roman roads towards 'Aqaba. Alfred Musil's adventurous journeys record very valuable data (*Arabia Petraea I Moab, II Edom*, 1907). The Fathers of the Dominican Ecole Biblique at Jerusalem have made many exact contributions (Jaussen et Savignac: *Mission archéologique en Arabie* 1909, and Jaussen's "Customs of the Arabs in the Land of Moab"). In 1909 the Franciscan Fr. Meistermann, who had done such great work in Palestine, pub-

lished his *Guide du Nil au Jourdain*, which is still serviceable. Still more recently Fritz Frank of Jerusalem and Albrecht Alt have gathered very valuable information (*Aus der 'Araba*, I, II, III, IV, 1934-5).

It was only after World War I that any real progress was made in a comprehensive survey of the country east of the Jordan. A new Government in the country opened up Jarash and Petra to visitors, and the development of a Transjordan Department of Antiquities by Garstang and Horsfield prepared the way for a survey of the whole country. The Government helped to make a success of the excavations and surveys that have since been carried out. The progress which had been made in the determination of ceramic chronology, especially by Dr. Albright and Dr. Fisher, was an indispensable item. Previous surveys had had to depend largely upon inscriptions, which are much more numerous in Transjordan than in Cisjordan, but still far too few, and almost wanting in pre-Roman times.

In 1925 Garstang and Horsfield of the Transjordan Dept. of Antiquities began the clearing of the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine city of Jarash. "Baalbek is more gigantic, Palmyra more spacious, Petra more exotic, but none of them has greater charm and none preserves more that is of historical interest than Gerasa" (McCown, *The Ladder of Progress*, p. 309). Later Crowfoot for the British School of Archaeology and Yale University joined in the work. Later still, an all-American expedition, Yale University and American School of Research, took over. The work continued until 1935, and the results were published by Kraeling in *Gerasa* 1938.

Géographie de la Palestine, 2 Vols, 1938, by Fr. Abel, O.P., is most useful.

The American Schools were making good their promises, and the accomplishment is largely the work of Professor Glueck, who was director of the School in 1932-33, and 1936-

1940. He undertook to apply the technique of the surface observation of ceramic chronological data to the whole region. The Army and Police gave him every help and the R.A.F. Sqn./Ldr. Trail flew him over the ground. He was able in five years to cover the whole country from Nahr ez Zarqa to 'Aqaba¹. In addition he made two major excavations, at Khirbet et Tannur (1937) and Tell el Kheleifeh (1938-40) (*The River Jordan* and *The Other Side of the Jordan*).

The discoveries have ranged from prehistoric dock drawings to medieval Arab castles. Much information has been gathered on the pre-Israelite period, the "wanderings in the wilderness", and on the great Nabataean empire. The history of the Edomites and the story of King Solomon's mines have been illustrated and many passages of the Bible have been interpreted.

Excavations were carried on by an Italian Expedition on the Amman Citadel directed by R. Barzoccini, 1927-31.

Other excavations of late years are: Mount Nebo by the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in 1933, 35-37, and the Town of Nebo, also by the Franciscans in 1933-39; report in *The Memorial of Moses on Mount Nebo and The Town of Nebo (Khirbet el-Mekhayyat)* edited by the Franciscan Printing Press of Jerusalem. Wadi Dhobai has been excavated by Waechter and Seton-Williams 1937-8 (*Journal Pal. Oriental Soc.* 1938) and Dhiban by the American Schools of Oriental Research 1950-51 and 1952-53 (*BASOR* Feb. 1952). New excavations are carried out in many other places in recent years.

Detailed maps showing the location of sites were published in *Annual of The American*

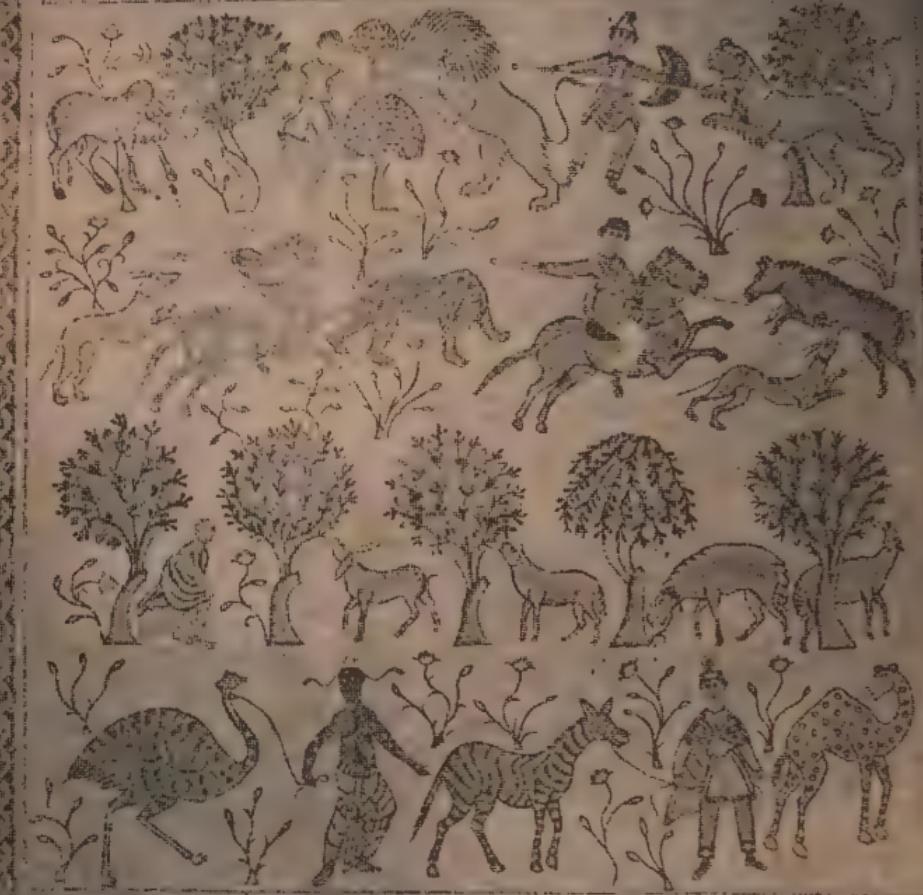
¹ *Explorations in Eastern Palestine* Vols 14,15, 18-19 of the *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research*.

Schools of Oriental Research, Vol. 18-19 (1936).

In 1949 appeared the Archaeological Map of East Jordan, compiled by the Dept. of Lands and Surveys, from information supplied by the Dept. of Antiquities: 3 parts, Amman, Karak, Ma'an. It gives the location of the important sites and adds identifications in places. Each site is marked by a sign or signs showing the period or periods to which it belongs. The periods are arranged accordingly:

Prehistoric	12,000 B.C.	—	4,000 B.C.
Chalcolithic	4,000 "	—	3,000 B.C.
Bronze Age	3,000 "	—	1,200 B.C.
Iron Age	1,200 "	—	400 B.C.
Nabataean	400 "	—	160 A.D.
Roman	63 "	—	333 A.D.
Byzantine	330 A.D.	—	640 A.D.
Arab	up to —	1700 A.D.	
Crusader (12th and 13th century A.D.)			

In 1951 appeared the first issue of the *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, edited by G. Lankester Harding, F.S.A. which is a successor to the *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities of Palestine (Q.D.A.P.)*, and is sponsored by the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. In 1973 the Department of Antiquities in the fiftieth anniversary of its establishment published *The Archaeological Heritage of Jordan. Part I: The archaeological Periods and sites (East Bank)*, Amman 1973, giving a description of the various archaeological periods found in Jordan, and a list of sites with maps.



Mt. Nebo-Siyagha. Floor mosaic of the baptistry (5331 A. D.).

Historical Outline

From what is known up to the present the country east of the Jordan shows a series of alternative periods of great activity and complete lifelessness. Naturally only the former can be treated.

Exploration and excavation have revealed that the desert as well as the sown were occupied in the Stone Age (e.g. Kilwa and Wadi Dhobai).

It has been possible to establish the presence of two outstanding civilizations later on. The one is the early Bronze Age civilization: the other is the Iron Age civilization¹. To the first period according to Glueck belong the *menhirs*, *massebot* and other standing monoliths discovered at Lejjun, Adir, El-Megheirat, and Bab edh Dhra'; likewise the dolmens of which there are great fields at 'Udheimi, in Wadi Hisban, and west of Irbid near Kefr Yuba, also around Ajlun and near Kerazeh. Others, including Albright, hold that the dolmens belong to the Neolithic period, and thus makes them 2,000 years older, and therefore older than like monuments in France and Portugal. Two attempts have been made to ex-

¹ Archaeological Periods according to Glueck:		
Paleolithic	before 10,000 B.C.	
Mesolithic (Natufian)	about 10,000 "	— 4,500 B.C.
Chalcolithic (Ghassulian)	about 4,500 "	— 3,000 B.C.
Bronze Age	about 3,000 "	— 1,200 B.C.
Iron Age (Including		
Israelite-Edomite)	about 1,200 "	— 300 B.C.
Hellenistic	about 300 "	— 63 B.C.
Roman (Including		
Nabataean and Thamudic)	63 "	— 323 A.D.
Byzantine	323 A.D.	— 636 A.D.
Arabic	636 A.D.	— 1517 A.D.
(Including Ommayad 661-750 and Crusaders 1096-1291)		
Turkish	1517 "	— 1918 A.D.

cavate these sites: Turville-Petre at Kerazeh (1930) and Stékélis at 'Udheimi (1933), but the whole question as to the date and the builders of these megalithic structures is *sub judice*.

Dolmens, menhirs and cromlechs are by most scholars assigned to the period of transition from the Early Bronze to the Middle Bronze 2300-1900 B.C. and they probably had a religious significance.

There is another type of megalithic monument found widely which is equally puzzling: a *ryjm* (stone heap), or when large a *qas* (watchtower), or a *Khirbet* (ruin): the round ones are sometimes called *qasr malfuf*, *cabbage castle*, from their shape. Glueck says that these belong to the Iron Age (1200-600 B.C.). Khirbet el Kheleifeh excavated by Glueck belongs to the Iron Age. From the discoveries of slag heaps in the Wadi 'Araba we can at least admit the truth of Deuteronomy (8,9): "Where without want thou shalt eat thy bread, and enjoy abundance of all things; in a land whose stones contain iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper", at least in small amounts.

Now turning to historical documents we shall trace the history of the country.

In Gn 14, we have an account of the raid of Chedorlaomer and the Eastern Kings, who conquered all East Jordan from Ashtaroth and Ham in the north to El-Paran, which may possibly be situated on the north shore of the Gulf of 'Aqaba. The archaeological facts agree with this. The time was about 1900 B.C., or perhaps it was some years later, in the Bronze Age, and such a thorough destruction was wrought upon all the fortresses and settlements of the land that the particular civilization they represented never again recovered. Permanent villages and fortresses were not to rise again in this region till the beginning





of the Iron Age¹.

Before this raid the people were mainly agricultural and lived in disunited feudal city-states. This was unsuited to withstand an organized army with the result that they were destroyed separately, and the country was occupied by tent-dwellers.

Original Peoples

At the beginning of the 13th century B.C. a new agricultural civilization appeared: this belonged to the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Amorites, who developed in the Iron Age. The Edomites were the descendants of Esau²: the Moabites and Ammonites were the descendants of Lot (Gn 19). The Amorites were a Semitic people who had pushed down from the north. These were the peoples who occupied the country on the arrival of the Israelites after their escape from Egypt.

For the time being they had pushed back the Bedouin farther into the desert and built up strong states, mainly under influence from the north, from Syria.

The Edomites were to the south, in Seir, and had dispossessed the original inhabitants, the Horites (Horrites), or mountain dwellers (Gn 36, 20).

Khirbet Ras en Naqb and Khirbet Shedyid were Edomite fortresses. Gn 36 lists

¹ The main highway on the east of the Jordan runs from 'Aqaba to Madaba to the Hauran and to Damascus. The present highway only follows one that has been centuries old, and that for the same geographical, topographical and economic reasons.

The new desert highway opened in 1961 does not follow the great highway of old, but rather the pilgrim track, Darb el Hajj, followed since the 16th century. The road that connects the towns may still be called the main highway.

² Esau (hairy) had another name Edom (red) cfr. Gn 25,25.

eight Edomite Kings before Israel had a King. In time, pushed first by the Assyrians, then by Babylonians and Persians and later by the Nabataeans a great part of them emigrated from their former territory in Edom to southern Palestine, Idumaea, and became Idumaeans. They took the country as far north as Hebron and gave rise to the Herodian dynasty.

Farther north came the land of Moab from the River Zared (Wadi el Hasa) in the south to the River Arnon with its capital at Qir-Haraseth (Karak). At the advent of Israel it had its northern frontier at the Arnon (Mujib), and Qasr el-'Al and Qasr Abu el-Kharaq (near the Mujib), were Moabite fortresses. But the kingdom had been larger. In Nb 21, it is related that the king of Moab was defeated by Sihon, king of Amorites, and lost all the territory north of the Arnon: then Sihon made Heshbon his place of residence¹.

¹ The most important towns the Moabites lost to Sihon were Heshbon in the north and Dhiban in the south. Henceforth Moab sought to get this territory back and later fought Israel for the possession of this fertile plateau between the Wadi Hisban and the Wadi Mujib. Whenever an opportunity arose the Moabites sought their lost province. According to Judges 3, 12, they captured it under King Eglon. "And he joined to him the children of Ammon and Amalec: and he went and overthrew Israel, and possessed the city of the palm trees (Jericho). And the children of Israel served Eglon King of Moab eighteen years". Finally Ehud (Aod) and the Ephraimites drove them out and there was peace for 80 years (J 3). But again Moab attacked at the time of Samuel (1 K 12, 9).

From about the 11th century, or at least from David's time, Moab was subject to Israel, but regained its independence at the end of the reign of Achab and maintained it despite attempts to invade the country by the Kings of Judah, Israel and Edom (2 K 3). King Mesha restored the original boundaries of the Kingdom and the Moabites continued to hold them until the Kingdom finally disappeared in the 6th century B.C.

North of Moab lay the land of the Ammonites. They had taken the land from a giant race called the *Zomzommim* (howlers), Dt 2,20. The original kingdom consisted of a small fertile strip on the east side of the south-north stretch of the Wadi Zarqa and extended eastward to the desert, and its capital was Rabbath Ammon (Amman). At one time the kingdom must have extended south as far as the eastern stretch of the Arnon.

Next to the Bene Ammom was the kingdom of the Amorites, whose king was Sihon, whose capital was Heshbon. The east boundary of the Amorite kingdom and the west boundary of the Ammonite kingdom was the Jabbok (Wadi Zarqa). The Amorite kingdom extended from the east side of the northern half of the Dead Sea to the east side of the southern end of the Lake of Galilee.

North of the Ammonites was the Amorite kingdom of Bashan, whose king was Og, whose capital was Edrei (Dera'a): he was of the race of the giants, and his bed of iron, nine regular cubits long and four wide, was shown by the Ammonites in their capital Rabbath Ammon (Dt 3:11). His territory stretched in the main from the east-west stretch of the Jabbok to the Yarmuk, and from the east side of Sihon's kingdom along the Jordan to the desert.

All these kingdoms begin with the Iron Age, the 13th cent. B.C., and continued to exist till the 6th cent. A.D. The fact that they only began with the 13th century must be taken into account when considering the very debated date of the Exodus.

The Exodus

Coming from the south, the Israelites first met the Edomites. The Lord forbade them to attack the Edomites as children of Esau, and the Edomites in turn refused passage so that the Israelites were forced to make a big detour through 'Aqaba and the desert in order to reach the Zared (Wadi Hasa). Here they met

the Moabites, against whom, as children of Lot, they were forbidden to fight. Keeping to the east of Moab, they reached the Arnon, the southern boundary of the Amorite kingdom. "And Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying: I beseech thee that I may have leave to pass through thy land. We will not go aside into the fields or the vineyards, we will not drink waters of the wells, we will go the King's highway, till we be past thy borders" (Nb 21, 21).

Sihon contested the passage and he was defeated at Jasa and his kingdom was taken. They then advanced without touching the Ammonites, for they were the children of Lot. They pushed north and captured the Kingdom of Bashan, whose king was Og.

The work of keeping these kingdoms safe from the incursions of the lawless Bedouins was very important, and a long line of defences were built along the east border of Edom, Moab and Ammon. This line of defence posts is mentioned in *Exploration in Eastern Palestine*, pp. 24, 73, 74. Later on like defences had to be manned, and even to-day forts stand along the east border of Jordan, although the changed circumstances have reduced their importance.

All the country taken was divided between the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh. From Mt. Nebo Moses was allowed a glimpse of the Promised Land, which he was destined never to enter. See Mendenhall: *The Hebrew Conquest of Palestine*, BA No. 3 1963.

In Judges 3 we find Eglon, the fat king of Moab, in alliance with the Ammonites and Amalecites, taking Jericho, which he held for 18 years, until it was freed by Aod, the left-handed. This was about 1150 B.C.

In Judges 6, we read of the Midianites attacking Israel. Their territory was to the south east of 'Aqaba, but passing over the Jordan they occupied a part of Israel for 7

years. Mention of camels shows that they were nomad forces, and they were joined by the Amalecites and Cedemites from south Palestine. Gideon, the judge of the Israelites, defeated them and captured two Midianite princes Oreb and Zeb. He pursued them across the Jordan, past Succoth (Socchoth), and defeated them again at Jegbaa (modern Jubeiha near Amman). He continued the pursuit and captured at Carcor, somewhere in the Wadi Sirhan, the Midianite kings, Zebee and Salmana. He then returned to punish Phanuel and Socchoth which had refused him help. He slew the two kings and "took the crescents that were on the necks of their camels". Much booty, especially gold rings, was taken from the Midianites, who were Ismaelites.

In Judges 10, again the Ammonites are raiding Israel, and demanding back the territory taken by Moses from the Arnon to the Jaboc. They are defeated by Jepheth.

In 1 Samuel 2, we find the Ammonites again attacking Israel under their king Nahash, but he is defeated by Saul.

During this long period Edom and Moab are seldom mentioned. When King David had united the western side of the Jordan and broken for ever the power of the Philistines, he overran Moab and Edom despite family ties and the fact that they had often given him sanctuary. In Moab he slew two-thirds of the population. The Edomites were defeated by Joab, but a young Edomite prince, Hadad, escaped to Egypt, where he was well received and where he married the Queen's sister (1 Kings 11, 17-19). David also defeated the Amalecites who were raiding South Palestine (2 S).

In 2 Samuel 10, we read that David sent a deputation to Hanun, King of Ammon, to console with him on the death of his father Nahash about 995 B.C. The deputation was insulted, which led to war. The Israelites captured the water supply and forced Rabbath Ammon to

surrender, although helped by a Syrian force.

Upon the death of Solomon, 930 B.C., there is great confusion on both sides of the Jordan. Omri (885-874) subdued Moab but this we know from the Moabite Stone and not from the Bible. From the north came a new danger.

Assyrian Period

Assyria, meanwhile, was advancing south, first under Ashurnasirpal (885-859 B.C.) and then Shalmanesser II (859-825). At the battle of Karkar (854 B.C.) men from both sides of the Jordan fought against Shalmaneser.

The danger of the Assyrians past, the Aramean kingdom of Damascus under Ben-Hadad refused to fulfil the conditions of the alliance made with Achab of Israel at Afeq (Fiq) and this resulted in war. Achab supported by Jehosaphat attacked Ramoth Gilead, the apple of discord between Aram and Israel, and Achab was killed in the battle (854 B.C.).

The defeat had dire results. Moab rebelled against Israel. Although Jehoshaphat had recaptured Edom, where a native sheikh had been appointed governor, and the Red Sea trade had been resumed, yet he was now faced with an invasion of the Moanites (from Ma'an) helped by the Moabites and Edomites. When nearing Bethlehem their want of discipline led to a fight among themselves (2 Ch 20, 23).

The defection of Moab was graver. Mesha, king of Moab, with Dhiban as capital, captured many towns, before he was opposed, about 850 B.C., by the kings of Israel and Juda, joined by Edom, which by then had a king. The expedition at first succeeded, but failed before Kerak. Mesha set up a record of the war in a stele found in Dhiban in 1868.

Israelite strength or weakness in Moab is the criterion for judging the strength of Juda in its domination of Edom.

During the reign of Jehoram (849-843) Edom again revolted (2 Ch 21,8) and during the reign

of Amaziah (800-786) the war was carried as far as Sila or Petra the capital, from the cliffs of which 10,000 prisoners were hurled to their death. Ezion Geber, now renamed Elath, remained in Judaean hands and a seal of Joatham (742-735) was found in the excavations there.

Two statues discovered at the north end of the Amman Citadel, dating from about 800 B.C. reflect influences from all the great civilizations around, Phoenician, Egyptian and Assyrian.

At this time a serious revolt of the Bedu in the Wadi Sirhan broke out. Under their leader, Yatha, they reached Homs in Syria. Ammuladi, king of the Kedar Arabs, was captured by Chemosh Haleth, King of Moab, during a raid on that country. Amminadab was king of Ammon, and his name has been found on objects found in Amman. A rock-cut tomb on the citadel produced beside pottery a seal of "Adoni Nur, servant of Ammi Nadab".

In this period the Assyrian records make the first historical reference to the Nabataeans, later so prominent in the country, who were occupying the country south and east of Edom, the old country of Midian.

From the north the Arameans were pressing. Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah (843) tried to wrest Ramoth Gilead out of the hands of Syria (2 Kings 8, 28).

In 839 Hazael of Syria ravaged the land "from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the valley of the Arnon, that is Gilead and Bashan" (2 Kings 10, 32).

See *The Aramean Empire and its relations with Israel*, BA No. 4. 1962.

Finally the Assyrian king Adad-Narari IV (810-781 B.C.) took Damascus and then received tribute from all the land down to Egypt. From 781 till 727 Assyria was weak and Israel, especially under Jeroboam, brought the whole country under its sway (2 Kings 14). Then

in Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser (745-727) came to the throne and in a few years reasserted the power of the Assyrians, and by 738 all had submitted. Egypt which had always incited rebellion against Assyria proved a "broken reed" (Is. 36,6) and retired. In 734 Tiglath-Pileser raided the country and carried off many of the people, including those of Gilead (2 Kings 15, 29), "And he carried away Reuben, and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh" (1 Ch 5), and even the Sabaean Arabs paid tribute. Sargon II (721-705) finally destroyed Samaria, and carried the war south into Arabia. But Sargon was troubled by the King of the seashores, Merodach-Baladan, who thrice occupied Babylon. Each time the subject people, stirred up by Egypt, tried to free themselves, and finally in 715 they all united, east and west of the Jordan, against Assyria. Again they united against Sennacherib (704-681) in 702. Sooner or later Assyria must deal with Egypt, as the source of all the unrest. Esarhaddon (680-669) decided to do so. He prepared the way by a vigorous raid on both sides of the Jordan, and Egypt fell in 670. As soon as he retired, the conquest was over, for Assyria could not hold Egypt.

Neo-Babylonian Period

Again during the reign of Ashurbanipal (668-626) the same pattern of rebellion was followed, but little by little the great Assyrian empire was weakening. It finally fell, with the fall of Nineveh in 612, to the new power of the Medes from the north and the Chaldeans from the south (Neo-Babylonians). A new Chaldean Empire arose with Babylon as its capital, and lasted till 538. Its greatest king, Nebuchadnezzar (604-562), first stirred up the peoples east of the Jordan to attack the kingdom of Judah and its capital Jerusalem (2 Kings 24, 1-4) and finally in 586 he destroyed Jerusalem.

Many of the Jews fled to Moab and Edom for safety, and for reasons unknown, Baalis, king of Ammon, sent a certain Ishmael to kill Gedaliah, the Babylonian governor of Palestine.

By 580 the Nabataeans were occupying Edom and the Edomites moved out to south Palestine, later known as Idumea.

The Persian Empire (549-331 B.C.)

In 538 Cyrus the Persian (555-529) captured Babylon, the whole fertile Crescent and Egypt. When Darius (521-485) of the Achaemenid house came to the throne, the Persian Empire was organized in a remarkable way. There was little oppression and complete religious toleration. The provinces were on the whole peaceful and prosperous, and much political freedom was granted. The Empire held together until it was overthrown by Alexander the Great. Jordan and Palestine were placed under the Arabian satrapy. When the Persians allowed some of the Jews to return, the people east of the Jordan remained hostile to the reviving state of Judah (Ezra 4, 4).

At this period a certain Tobias of Jewish extraction founded a dynasty in Ammon which ruled for some centuries, for the Tobiads are mentioned again in Ptolemaic times. He was supported by Sanballat, the Horonite and Geshem the Arab (for Geshem see BA 18).

Nabataean and Hellenistic Periods

It was during this period that the Nabataeans began to play their important rôle east of Jordan, although we do not hear of them as such until 312 B.C., by which time the whole of the Near East had fallen to the Greeks under Alexander the Great who died in 322. Alexander's Empire was divided: Ptolemy took Egypt and Seleucus took the Asiatic part. Both continued to be Greek kingdoms. Greek "with a difference", it is true; the combination of Greek with Oriental is called Hellenistic; the country districts preserved their local customs and languages. But Alexander's opening of the

eastern world to the west let loose a flood of Hellenism on to the east. Greek cities arose in every direction, and Oriental cities hurried to graecize themselves. The Greek language became ubiquitous in the East, and with the language came Greek education, thought, fashions and culture.

A struggle arose between the Ptolemies, and the Seleucids, and the land on either side of the Jordan was the land of contention between Asia and Africa, then, as on many occasions before and since. Egypt at first was successful, but later Syria overran the whole area, which forced Egypt to appeal to the rising power of Rome. It was during the supremacy of the Seleucis that the Jews rebelled in what is known as the Maccabaean Wars. Judas Macca-baeus punished severely their inveterate enemies across the Jordan and transferred Jews living in Gilead to the other side of the Jordan, but on the other hand promoted amicable relations with the Nabataean Arabs. The Hasmo-naean power came to an inglorious end in 67 B.C., when two members fought each other for the sovereign power: they appealed to Rome and Rome came. Pompey took Damascus in 64 B.C.: he was in Jerusalem in 63 B.C.

Roman and Byzantine Periods

When Pompey took over the land beyond the Jordan, it was not by any means a compact state of one people; far from it. The Nabataeans (whose history we shall see more in detail in connection with Petra) since 300 B.C. had grown into a great power that finally stretched from 'Aqaba to Damascus. Dr. Glueck has examined more than 500 Nabataean sites: most of them are in the sown, although their forts in the desert to protect their caravan routes were also important.

Concurrently with the growth of the Nabataean kingdom the Decapolis came into being. This was a confederation of ten cities. The original cities were very probably: Scytho-

polis (Beisan), Pella (Khirbet Fahil), Dion (Husn)¹, Gadara (Um Qeis), Hippos (Fiq)², Gerasa (Jarash), Philadelphia (Amman), Kanatha (Qanawat), Raphana (Al Rafah), Damascus. All except one were east of the Jordan. They were never, perhaps, a fixed number, as cities joined and withdrew, and at times they were as many as 18, among them Arbila (Irbid), Capitolias (Bait Ras), Edrei (Deraa) and Bosra. They were modelled on Greek cities, spoke the Greek language, practised the Greek religion and adopted Greek culture. Pella, Dion and Gerasa were probably founded by Greek soldiers, the others were older towns occupied by Greek communities. On the arrival of Pompey they formed a military alliance for self-protection against the Jews, the Nabataeans and the desert tribes. When later the Emperor Trajan joined Perea with the Decapolis to create the Province of Arabia (90 A.D.) (to which the Nabataean kingdom was later added in 106 A.D.), these cities remained almost autonomous.

The capital of the new province, called Arabia Petraea, was first at Petra and then at Bosra in Syria. The third legion (Cyrenaica) was posted in the north and the fourth (Martaia) in the south of the country. Two great camps built to accommodate the latter, at Lajjun near Karak and Adhruh near Petra, can still be seen. The great road of Trajan from Bosra to 'Aqaba was begun and finished under Hadrian. Other side roads were also built.

Herod the Great was allowed to hold the Perea which Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.) had captured with several of the cities of the Decapolis: Alexander had built the fortress of Machaerus (Mukawir) to guard the south-

¹ According to some it is to be identified with Tell el Ash'ari, between Hippos and Kanatha. Other possible sites are Dahama and Aidun.

² Or Qal'at el Hisn and Fiq would be the site of Apheca.

ern frontier against the Nabataeans. Under Roman rule the country was organized. A stop was put to desert raids and tribal feuds: the arts flourished and new towns were built.

Christianity gained a strong foothold east of the Jordan between the second and third centuries. In the second part of "*The Town of Nebo*", there is a general survey of the ancient Christian monuments beyond the Jordan. The vast majority of these Christian remains belong to the Byzantine period. Only very few are of the Arab and Crusaders periods.

The ecclesiastical monuments south of the Syrian border and east of the railway are the best preserved, and they have been carefully studied and the results are available in the publications of the American archaeological expedition to Syria in 1890-1900 and of the Princetown University expeditions to Syria in 1904-1905, 1909.

Some 20 places in the original Transjordan were episcopal sees in Byzantine times: many of them have still titular bishops.

The Arab period

The country enjoyed a period of peace except for the desert area between the land of the Ghassanids, a Christian border tribe, who acted as hired mercenaries of the Byzantine Emperors and the land of the Lakhmids of Hira, the Arab buffer state west of the Persian Empire of the Sassanians. Chosroes II of Persia overran and destroyed the country in 614 A.D., and thereby left it open to the coming attack of the Arabs in 635. Part of the country was occupied by the Arabs before the Battle of Yarmuk (636) and the rest of it immediately afterwards.

The first clash between the Moslems and Byzantines took place at Motah (629), near Karak, when the Moslems were defeated and their three great leaders Zaid ibn Harith, Jaafar ibn abu Talib and Abdallah ibn Ruaha, were killed. They were buried at Mazar, where

their tombs are still to be seen in the mosque. The remnant of the army was led back to Medina by young Khalid ibn al Walid, soon to become the champion of militant Islam.

In the following year Mohammed led in person an expedition against the oasis of Tabuk, where he opened negotiations with neighbouring settlements that led to their submission. The people were granted security and the right to retain their property and profess their religion on condition that they paid an annual tribute. First among these settlements was Aylah ('Aqaba), whose population was Christian. South of it stood Maqna, with a Jewish population mostly engaged in weaving and fishing. Another was Adhruh with a hundred families and north of it al-Jarba (today Ain el Jarba el Kabira) whose people were also Christian. These were the only places with which Islam established contact in the lifetime of the Prophet.

In 633 A.D. came the general invasion of the country. The first engagement took place in the Wadi 'Araba, where Yazid ibn abi Sufyan defeated Sergius the patrician of Palestine. The country was soon overrun and only some towns, such as Jerusalem and Caesarea, west of the Jordan held out in expectation of aid from the Emperor Heraclius.

Heraclius raised an army of 50,000, mainly Armenian and Arab mercenaries, and marched south to meet Moslem troops at the juncture of the Yarmuk with its tributary al Raqqad, near the present al Yaqusah, on Aug. 20, 636. There was a great dust storm which was decided advantage for the Moslems who definitely won the day. The rest of the country in time surrendered, the last town being Caesarea in 640.

As Jordan lies on the Damascus-Arabia route, it continued to have some importance while the capital was in Damascus. The love of the Umayyad princes for the desert can readily be understood. It has a varying beauty

of its own which appeals to those who know it. The wife of Mu'awiyyeh and mother of Yezed I was a Beduin who raised her son in the *badiyah* (desert), more particularly the Palmyrene, where her Christian tribe roamed, and was responsible for that nostalgia which caused later Caliphs to build numerous places there, incidently escaping the recurring city plagues (*Hitti, History of Syria*, p. 440).

The plots of the Abbasid family, which finally destroyed the Umayyads and Jordan with them, were originally hatched at Hunnaimah, a little village in the Quweira plain south of Ma'an.

The Abbasids transferred the capital from Damascus to Baghdad and Jordan little by little became a forgotten land, and fell into decay.

The Crusaders

East Jordan for the next few centuries enjoyed rest if not prosperity, until the arrival of a new power, the Crusaders, which brought the country into the limelight once again. The Principality of Transjordan (*Oultre-Jourdain*) was the most important fief of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, and its capital, Le Krak or now Karak, was the centre of all Crusader activity east of the Jordan. The principality extended from Wadi Zarqua Ma'in to the Gulf of 'Aqaba and other fortresses were built at Shaubak (Montreal), Wadi Musa (Li Vaux Moyse) and Jeziret Far'on (Isle de Graye). From these fortresses the Crusaders attacked the Moslem caravans plying between Damascus, Mecca and Egypt, often in violation of truces. Qal'at el Rabad was built by one of Saladin's generals to harass the Crusaders and to protect the caravans.

After the Crusaders the history of the country is almost a blank. The Mamluk rulers of Egypt imposed their authority for a little, and built a fortress at 'Aqaba and repaired

Shaubak and Karak. Under the Turks the country remained in oblivion as part of the vilayet of Syria, until in the beginning of the 19th century travellers, as Burckhardt, brought it again to the notice of the world. The only Turkish concern was to guard the pilgrim road to Mecca.

Darb el Hajj

The *Darb el Hajj*, or Pilgrim Road, has been changed several times since the seventh century. But since the 16th century the pilgrims to Mecca adhered to a single track because of the fortified watering-places which the Ottoman Government built and kept guarded on their behalf. In the 19th century between 1819 and 1902 four European travellers followed and described this Western Hajj route. According to Burckhardt, Fridolin, Doughty and Castiau, the principal stations, in the area under consideration, were Mezerib, Qal'at el Mafrak, Qal'at ez Zarqa, Qal'at ed Dab'a, Qatrana, Qal'at el Hasa, 'Uneiza, Ma'an, 'Aqabat esh Shem (to be distinguished from 'Aqabat el Marsi on the Gulf of 'Aqaba) and el Mudawwara.

In 1876 Charles Doughty joined a *hajj* caravan of 6,000 pilgrims and 10,000 beasts (*Travels in Arabia Deserta*).

At Mezerib and Ma'an the Hajj caravan was in the habit of stopping for a rest of two or three days. Therefore, important annual market fairs were held in these towns. The caravan was usually delayed much longer at Mezerib (from 8 to 10 days) in order to make all final arrangements, and to enable all pilgrims from west of the Jordan and southern Lebanon to join the Hajj convoy. It was here that William of Tyre, in the 12th cent., attended the great fair which he described as being held among the pilgrims before their departure for Mecca. In the early part of the 19th cent. the caravan spent a whole day also at Qal'at ez Zarqa, during which the pilgrims amused themselves by hunting the wild boars which

were said to be plentiful in the Wadi Zarqa.

According to Marcel Castiau (*En Syrie: Le long du chemin des pèlerins de la Mecque*) the Qal'as were spaced along the Darb el Hajj, about 35 kms, apart: they were occupied by at least one Bedouin family and were often garrisoned by 3 or 4 Turkish soldiers. There were always two reservoirs, one for humans, the other for animals. In years of drought villagers and Bedouins were hired to fill at least one of the reservoirs at each station in advance of the great caravan. Supplies of food, forage and other necessary stores could be replenished at any one of the Qal'as. This was the usual practice until the Hejaz railway was completed as far as Medina in 1908.

In 1878 Sultan Abdul Hamid II decided to add a new people to an already very mixed population. He settled Chechens at Zarqa, Ruseifa, Sukneh and Suweileh. The Chechens are a Moslem mountain tribe of Daghestan, who opposed the advance of Russia. After the conquest of Daghestan in 1864 many of the people emigrated to Turkey. He settled Circassians in Wadi es Sir, Jarash, Na'ur, Suweileh, and Amman. The Circassians, or Adighé, emigrated from the country which is situated on the western slopes of the Caucasus along the coast of the Black Sea, after the Russian conquest in that region in the Russo-Turkish War 1877-78.

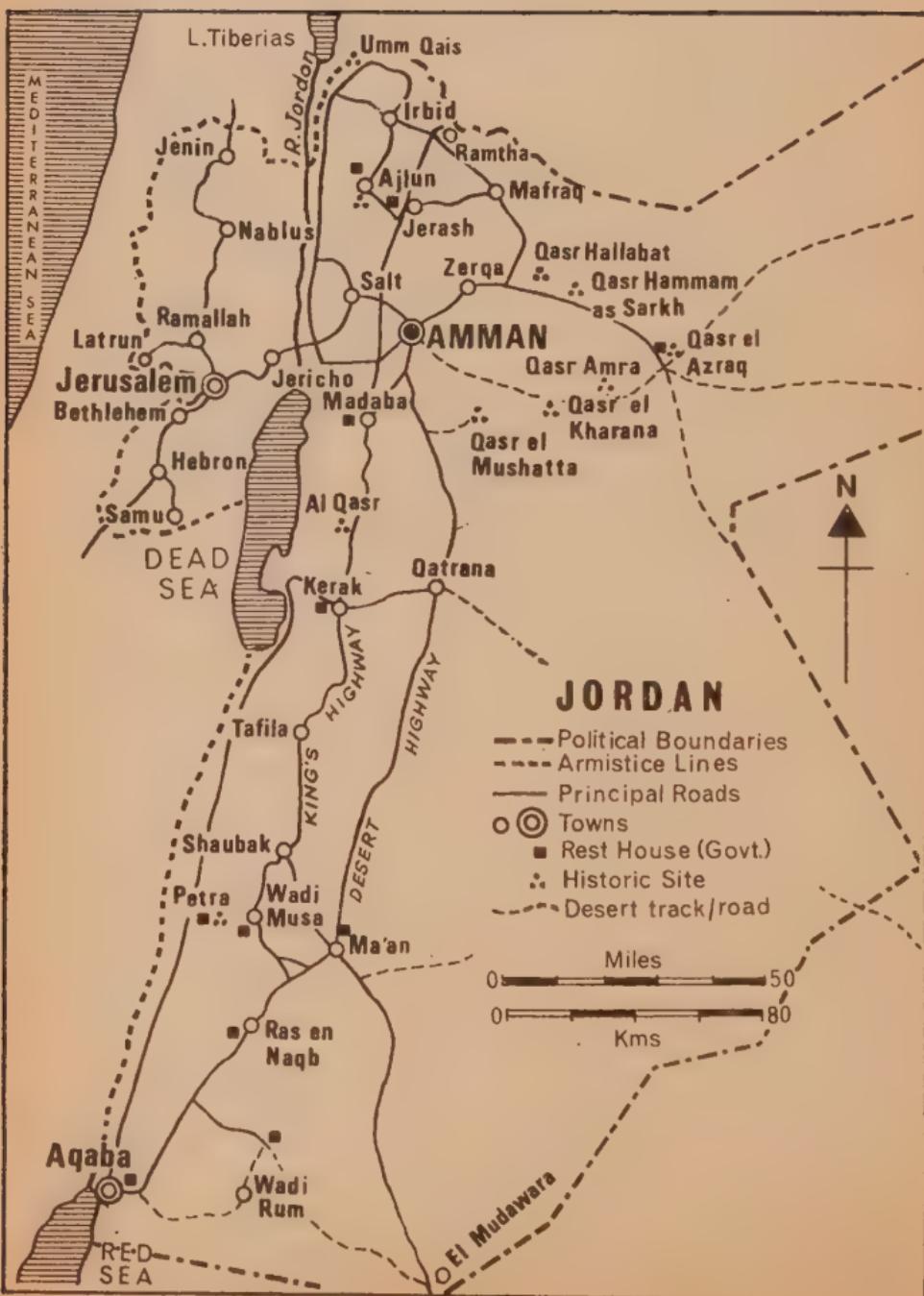
A number of Turkoman settlements existed before World War I, but the majority of the settlers retired from the country with the Ottoman troops. Er Rumman (on the road to Jarash) is one settlement that has remained. There is also a small Baha'i settlement at 'Adasiya in the Jordan valley.

In World War I Transjordan became the field of T.E. Lawrence's activities, and in October 1918 the country was occupied simultaneously by Arab and British troops. In 1920 it was entrusted to Britain as a Mandated Territory. In March 1921 the Amir Abdullah, second son of King Hussein and brother of King Feisal,

moved to Amman, a town of 3,000 souls, and assumed the administration of the country under the general direction of the High Commissioner for Palestine as representing the Mandatory Power. It was a country of 350,000 people. Thanks to benevolent rule and wise administration the country made rapid strides: peace and security were established and tribal raids ceased. In May 1946 Transjordan was proclaimed an independent country and the Amir became King Abdullah, its first King. This period is covered in the *Memoirs of King Abdallah*.

Following the withdrawal of the British from Palestine, the eastern half of Palestine was joined to Transjordan to become the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in April 1950. On the death of King Abdullah in 1951, he was succeeded by his son King Talal, who was succeeded by his son Hussein I in 1953.

The *Memoirs of King Abdallah* gives us a picture of the progress of the country from 1920 to 1945. King Hussein in his *Uneasy Lies the Head* shows us the unrest and progress in the country from 1951-61.



PART I

(Central Jordan)

Amman

Amman is the capital of Jordan. It has a population of about 1,000,000. It is the residence of the King (Qasr Raghdan) and the seat of the Government. It was an ancient city, first mentioned in Deuteronomy: "For only Og King of Basan remained of the race of the giants. His bed of iron is shewn, which is in Rabbath of the children of Ammon, being nine cubits long, and four broad after the measure of the cubit of a man's hand" (Dt 3, 11).

History

The history of this little kingdom is the history of an obstinate little nation which put up a long fight for its existence. Descended from Lot, Ammon means "the son of my people" (Gn 19, 38). At the time of the Exodus, Israel did not attack them, and anyhow, "the borders of the Ammonites were kept with a strong garrison" (Nb 21, 24). They were, therefore, at this time a strong nation. It was decreed that they should never be admitted to the privileges of the Israelites "not even after the tenth generation, because they would not meet you with bread and water in the way, when you came out of Egypt" (Dt 23, 4-5). Despite the order not to attack them, Moses gave to the tribe of Gad half the land of the children of Ammon (Jos. 13,25). During the Period of the Judges, from the time of Joshua to that of Saul (c. 1200-1025 B.C.), they, with Moab, made many attacks on the Israelites. Ammon joined king Eglon of Moab and captured Jericho and held it for 18 years, until they were defeated by Ehud (Aod). Again with Moab, Ammon laid claim to all Gilead, which it held for 18 years, and then crossed the Jordan and laid waste Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim. Jephte, the Galaadite, tried to show the king of Ammon that the Israelites held only land from the Amorites, and when Ammon refused to listen, Jephte attacked him and defeated him (Jg 11).

At the time of Saul (c. 1025) Nahash, King of Ammon, pushed his power as far west as the Jordan Valley, and laid siege to Jabesh-Gilead. "And all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash: Make a covenant with us; and we will serve thee. And Nahash the Ammonite answered them: On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may pluck out all your eyes, and make you a reproach in all Israel. And the ancients of Jabesh said to him: Allow us seven days, that we may send messengers to all the coasts of Israel, and if there be no one to defend us, we will come out to thee. The messengers therefore came to Gabaa of Saul: and they spoke these words in the hearing of the people. And all the people lifted up their voices and wept. And behold Saul came; following oxen out of the field, and he said: What aileth the people that they weep?... "And it came to pass, when the morrow was come that Saul put the people in three companies. And he came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch; and he slew the Ammonites until the day grew hot. And the rest were scattered, so that two of them were not left together" (1 Sam. 1-11). Shortly after Saul fought them again (1 Sam. 14-47) and one of David's first wars was against them (2 Sam. 8, 12).

In the course of time, Hanun, the son of Nahash, succeeded to his father's throne, and King David was well disposed to him, perhaps because both disliked Saul. When Nahash died, David sent his servants with a message of condolence. Hanun believed that they were sent to spy out Rabbath Ammon. "So Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away. When it was told to David he sent to meet them; for the men were greatly ashamed. And the King said: Stay at Jericho, till your beards be grown, and then return" (1 Ch 19). David sent Joab to avenge the insult and the Ammonites and their Syrian allies were engaged in battle near the city and defeated. The Syrians called in new forces, and this time David himself "gathered all Israel together, and passed over the Jordan" and defeated them "and all the Syrians were afraid to help the Bene-Ammon any more" (2 Sam. 10,19). Next year Rabbat Ammon was captured and looted, and it was at this time that Uriah was killed.

that David might appropriate his beautiful wife, Bathsheba.

"And he (David) took the crown of their king from his head, the weight of which was a talent of gold, set with the most precious stones: and it was put upon David's head. And the spoils of the city which were very great he carried away. And bringing forth the people thereof, he sawed them, and drove over them chariots with iron: and divided them with knives, and made them pass through brick-kilns. So did he to all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David returned with all the army to Jerusalem" (2 S 12, 30-31; 1 Ch 20, 2-3).¹

And we are told that David gave to God the vessels of gold, silver and brass taken from Ammon (1 Chron. 18,11).

David, however, must have saved a son of Nahash, for he is befriended by him later (2 S 17, 27-29). Among the 37 valiant men of David was Selec the Ammonite (2 S 23, 37).

Solomon (c. 970-945) had in his harem Ammonite wives, and they introduced their false god Moloch (or Milcom), and Solomon built a temple to him in Silwan, near Jerusalem (1 Kings 11, 1; 11, 5-7). One of these Ammonite wives, by name Naamah, was the mother of King Rehoboam, King of Judah (1 Kings 14, 21).

During the reign of Jehoshaphat (876-849) Ammon with Moab and Edom gathered to attack Jerusalem, but they ended by fighting among themselves (2 Ch 20).

The Ammonites were friendly with King Uzziah of Judah (c. 785-740 B.C.) and gave him gifts (2 Ch 26, 8), but his son Jotham fought them "and the chil-

¹ G. C. O'Ceallaigh in *Vetus Testamentum* XII (1962) April, disputes the reading and renders it: "And the people who were in the city he brought out and set at tearing it down, even with iron crows and with iron mattocks and he made them desecrate (or demolish) the Molechs. And so he did in every city of the children of Ammon. And David and all his people returned to Jerusalem".

dren of Ammon gave him at that time a hundred talents of silver and ten thousand measures of wheat, and as many measures of barley. So much did the children of Ammon give him in the second and third year" (2 Ch 27, 5).

With the fall of the surrounding country it became in turn subject to Assyria, Babylon and Persia. Among finds in Amman was the tomb of Adone Nur, the servant of Ammi-Nadar, who ruled at the time of Ashurbanipal (668-626).

Isaias (11, 14) and Jeremias (9, 25; 25, 21; 27, 3; 49) both prophesied the downfall of the children of Ammon. Also Ezechiel, (41, 1-6); "I will make Rab-bath a stable for camels, and the children of Ammon a couching place for flocks: and you shall know that I am the Lord" (25, 5). And Amos (1, 13-15) "For three crimes of the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not convert him; because he hath ripped up the women with child of Galaad to enlarge his border. And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabba: and it shall devour the houses thereof, with shouting in the day of battle and with a whirlwind in the day of trouble. And Melchom shall go into captivity, both he and his princes together, saith the Lord".

When Jerusalem fell in 586, many of the Jews fled to Ammon and Moab, but later returned when Gedaliah was appointed Governor . According to Jr 40, 14 this Gedaliah was killed by Ismail, the son of Nathaniel, who was sent by Baalis, the King of Ammon.

Later on Esdra (c. 444) mourned the fact that the people of Israel were marrying the sons and daughters of the Ammonites (9,1; Ne 13, 23).

About this time Ammon was in the hands of a certain "Tobias, the servant, the Ammonite". He was probably called "servant" by Nehemiah, because he was subject to Persia, but so was Nehemiah himself. Anyhow, Tobias, with Gossem the Arabian, opposed the building of Jerusalem by Nehemiah. Tobias jeered them: "Let them build, if a fox goes up, he will leap over the stone wall" (Ne 4, 3). This is the Tobias mentioned in connection with 'Iraq el Emir". This Tobias, with his descendant Hyrcanus, must have been the last of the Bene-Ammon.

The ancient kingdom was absorbed into the Greek Empire of Alexander. At first it was under the control of the Ptolemies of Egypt, and under Ptolemy II Philadelphos (285-247), the city was built, completely hellenized and named Philadelphia. The Seleucid King Antiochus III captured the city about 218 B.C. after a long siege, which might have gone on indefinitely if a prisoner had not revealed the existence of a secret under-ground passage leading to an outside water supply. Josephus Flavius says that there was only one small well in the citadel, but there were many cisterns.

About 135 it was ruled by a tyrant named Zeno. In 63 B.C. it joined the Decapolis league: in 31 B.C. it was occupied by the Nabataeans, but next year it was recaptured by Herod the Great: a Nabataean tomb has been found there. In 106 A.D. it was included in the Roman Province of Arabia. The Romans rebuilt the whole city on a grand scale, erasing in the process nearly all traces of its ancient buildings.

The beautiful structures in the lower part of the city and the temple on the acropolis date from the Roman period.

With the coming of Christianity to the country, it became the seat of a bishop, subject to Bosra, and Ciriis, one of its bishops, was present at the Council of Nice (325) and Synod of Antioch (341); another Eulogius was present at the Council of Chalcedon (451).

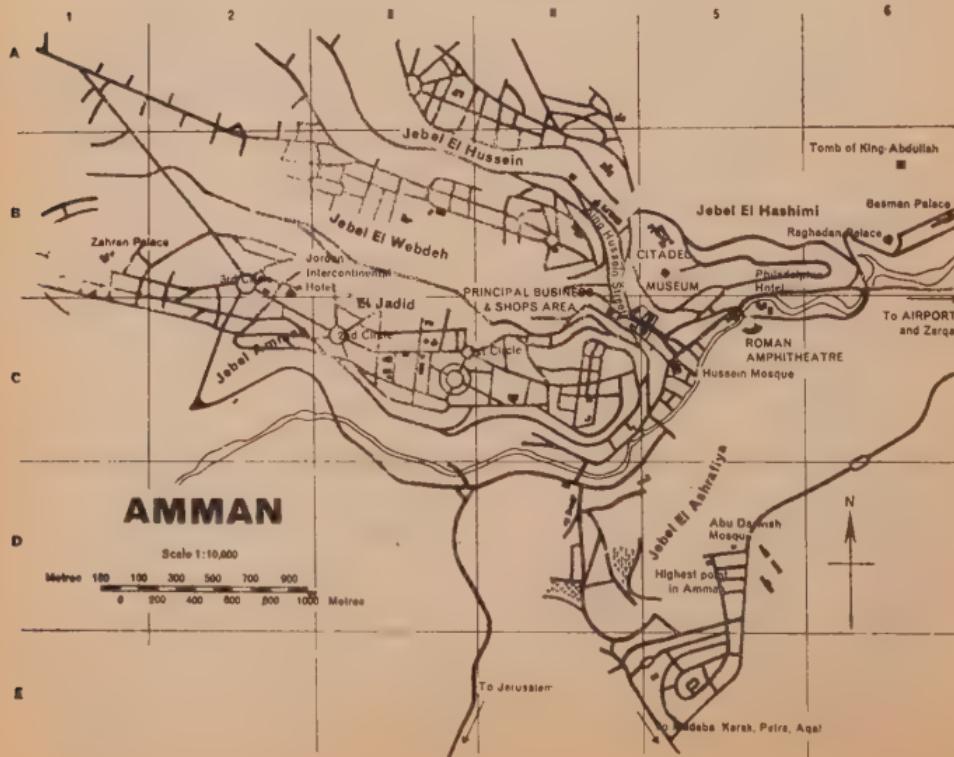
The sites of four ancient churches are known, one near the river on the present site of the principal mosque, two on the sides and one on the top of the acropolis.

Amman also had its martyrs. Under Diocletian (284-305), Theodore, Julian, Eubulus, Malkamon, Mokimos and Salomon suffered for the faith; their relics were kept in a church there and their feast was celebrated on Aug. 5. The little church on the west flank of the acropolis was probably that of St. Elianus, a martyr, who may have been a native of Madaba.

Another church was dedicated to St. George.

In 635 it passed to the Arabs, and for a time at least it retained some importance, for the Umayyads built a castle on the acropolis, and money was minted there under the Umayyads and Abbasids. Later it declined and nothing remained but a small village. For a thousand years it has no history. In the 15th cent. it is referred to as a pile of ruins. In 1878 it was resettled with Circassians by Sultan Abdul Hamid and took on new life. In 1922 it became the capital of Transjordan and in 1950 capital of Jordan.

The withdrawal of the British from Palestine and the subsequent fighting between Arabs and Jews led to a great influx of refugees across the Jordan. The population of Amman doubled in two weeks. A great many of them have been absorbed into the country's economy and others are still existing on various forms of relief provided by the United Nations and other private organizations. Since 1948 the greater part of the city has been rebuilt and little by little has spread out over the several hills divided by deep valleys.





Amman — General View

Amman — Ammonite Tower







*Jordan Museum
of Folklore
at the Theatre*



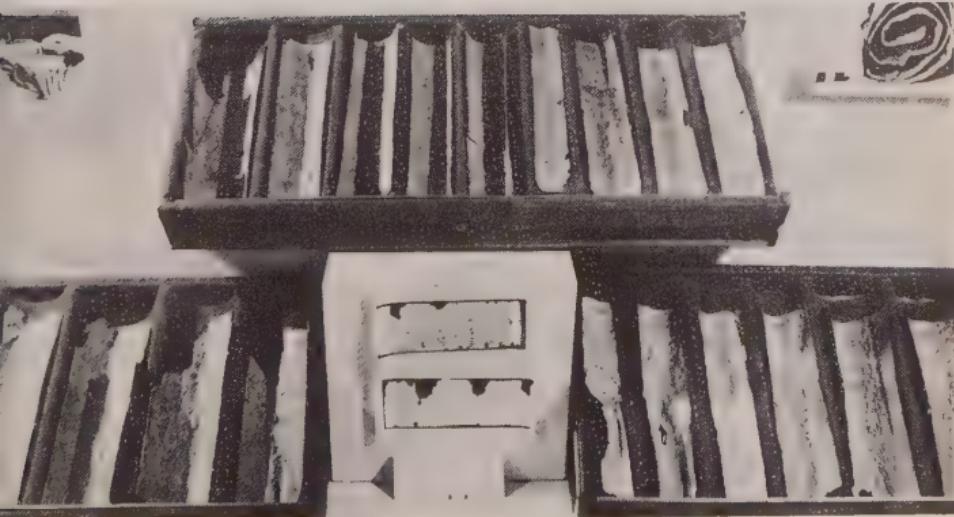
Jordan Archaeological Museum

Amman

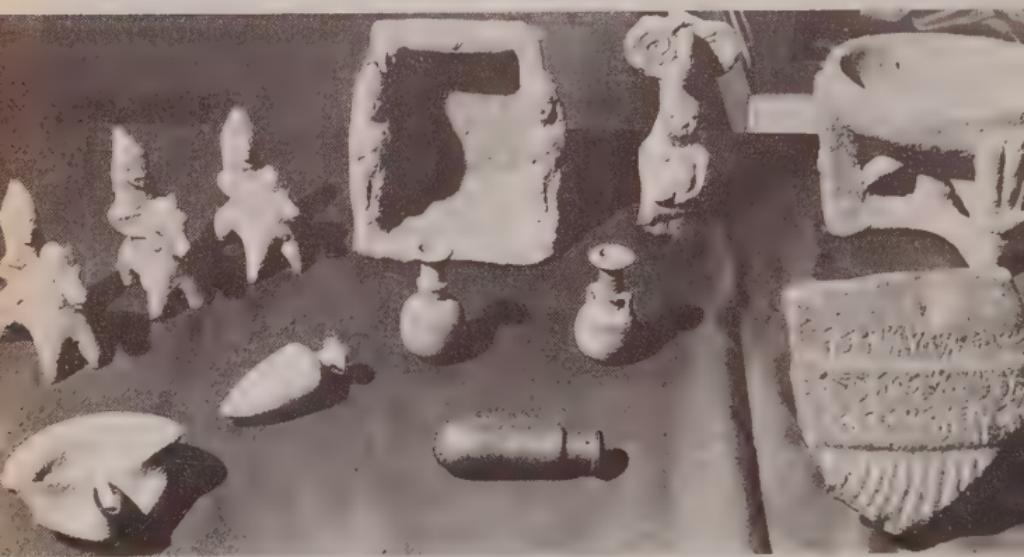
City of the Decapolis



THE
PAPYRUS
THE HIEROGLYPHS
AND THE STATUES



Qumran Copper Scroll



Ammonite Pottery
and Sculptures



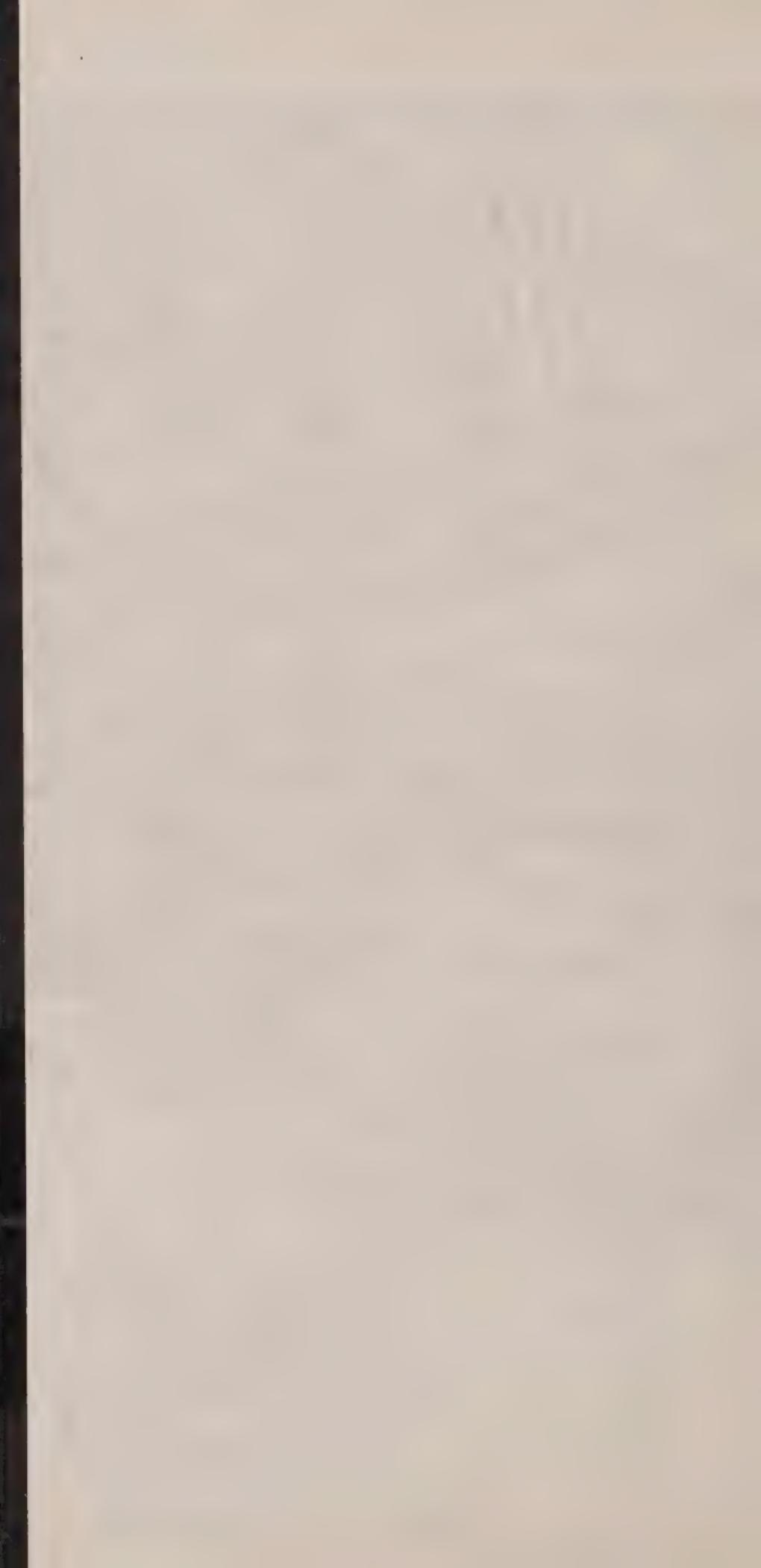


Iraq el-Amir (above)

The cave of the Sleepers (under)







Monuments

There are still some, but few remains of Roman Philadelphia to be seen.

The Roman Theatre, in part restored in 1960-61, was built into the side of the mountain and could accommodate 6,000 people. The few could accommodate 6,000 people. The few standing nearby formed part of a colonnade around a plaza, on the east side of which stood the Odeion, now adjoining the garden of the Philadelphia Hotel on the east. The Odeon (Latin Odeum) was a building constructed for musical performances in shape of a theatre, but with far slighter proportions and provided with a roof for acoustical purposes.

In the wadi, on the banks of the stream, near the municipality, can be seen the remains of the Roman nymphaeum. A nymphaeum, a shrine of the Nymphs (brides) was a magnificent building, in which it was customary to celebrate marriages. Below the nymphaeum can be seen part of the vaulting which once arched over part of the stream.

These buildings were erected towards the end of the second century.

Excavations carried out in 1965-1967 have proved that the area was first occupied in the Iron I-II (1200-6000 B.C.), reoccupied in the IV century B.C.

The discovery of Nabatean scrolls and coins of the first century A.D. may indicate that the city had come into closer ties with, if not under the direct control of the Nabateans. The east and south colonnade are constructed in typical Roman style of the Antonine Period (II cent.). The west colonnade seems later; the theatre was finished sometimes between 169 and 177 A.D. The foundation walls of the *Odeum* were built early in the second century A.D. and its superstructure and the stage-building were finished sometime close to the middle of the same century (Adnan Hadidi).

In the left wing of the theatre is located the *Jordan Museum of Folklore* where beautiful mosaics from Madaba, Jerash, Heshbon have been exposed.

The Acropolis (*Qal'a*) is evidence for some that Amman was first inhabited in the Middle Bronze period. Three tombs of this period were found in the area: one on *Jebel Jofeh el Gharbi*, the others on the Acropolis. In 1955 a late Bronze age temple was discovered when Amman airport was being enlarged. During the excavations by Hennessy many objects were found, like cylinder seals, scarabs and imported or locally imitated Mycenean vessels and imitation of Egyptian stone vessels. This proves that Amman was firmly in the mainstream of commercial life at that time.

The Citadel Hill is undoubtedly the site of ancient Amman.

On the southeastern corner there are several city walls. The outer one is to be dated to the Iron II period for it is covered with Iron II shards, while the two inner ones belong to the Early and Late Hellenistic periods, as demonstrated by the 1973 campaign under the direction of Dr. Zayadin. The principal remains are on Citadel Hill (*Qal'a*) or the Acropolis (Upper Town), standing on a hill to the north. It was enclosed by a wall, still traceable, fortified by towers at each corner. On the north and northwest sides considerable sections are still visible. Everything to be seen on the surface is of the Roman, Byzantine or Umayyad periods, except at the northeast corner where part of the Iron Age town wall is exposed.

The enclosed area had two levels, the northern containing all the important public buildings. The best preserved building is *El Qasr*, the castle. It is in the form of a square enclosing a Greek Cross. It is oriental in construction, and is the work of one of the Umayyad Caliphs of Damascus, although some attri-

bute it to the Persian Sassanies and still others to the Ghassanids.

Its purpose is not clear: it might have been an audience hall. Originally there was a dome over the centre, and there are on the walls remains of carvings.¹

Outside the citadel wall to the north is a rockcut cistern in which is the entrance to the underground passage to the citadel: the passage is blocked.¹

The *Roman Temple* at the southwestern corner was dedicated to Hercules (Hercules, Heracles), of whom there was a gigantic statue: from pieces found it could have been 8 meters high. Within what was the cella (in Greek *nāos*, in which was the image of the god and an altar for non-blood sacrifices) the bare rock is exposed, and it was probably the site of the earlier temples in which the rock represented the altar and the high place.

Only the lower courses, what must have been of a splendid building, remain; an inscription on a lintel dates the temple to the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.).

On the citadel are also the ruins of a poorly built church of the 6th or 7th century.

Excavations, carried out by the Italian Archaeological Mission in 1927 and 1931, reveal that beneath the Roman buildings was the ancient rock sacred to the Ammonites. On the hills around are the tombs of the old city. A few kms north of Amman, on the old Roman road to Jarash, is a fine Roman tomb called *Qasr Nueijis*, probably of the 3rd cent. A.D.

Nearby is the *Museum*, built in 1950. It is a small building designed by Austin Harrison. It has an interesting collection of objects

¹ For 5 statues found outside the north wall of the citadel dating probably from the 9-8 cent. B.C., see *ADAJ I*, IV-V.

illustrating the life and history of the country from prehistoric times to 1700 A.D., being the best pieces from excavations in the country during the past 30 years, as well as casual finds. There are remains from many tombs found around the city.

Modern city

The Department of Antiquities was established in 1924. Mr. George Horsefield was the first Chief Curator. He was succeeded by the Chief Curator, Mr. Lankester Harding, who through many years did excellent work and was the greatest authority on the antiquities of the country.

The beginnings of a University was opened on El Jebehe, in Dec. 1962.

On August 15th, 1973, the 700-bed multi-speciality general hospital opened its doors to receive its first patient. The hospital was constructed at the cost of four million Jordanian dinars, and provided with the most modern medical and educational facilities at a cost of two million additional dinars. This medical center is the first of its kind in Jordan.

Amman district is divided into Muhafe-sah Amman, Liwa Zerqa, Qadha Madaba, Nahiya Diban, Nahiya Wadi Sir, Nahiya Jiza, Nahiya Muwaqqar.

The city of Amman stretches out over many hills:

West: Jebels Amman, Hussein and Luweb-deh.

Centre: Jebels Ashrafiya, Jafa and Qal'a.

South: Jebels Taj, and Nadif.

Northeast: Jebels Ntsr and Hashimiya.

City outskirts: Jebels Nuzha and Abdun.

The hills around Amman are 918 ms above sea level.

Amman — River Jordan (by Na'ur: Kms 42)

The road from Amman to Jerusalem runs through part of Amman rural district and then through the Balqa district to the Jordan River.

This new road, opened in 1958, is an improvement on the Amman-Jerusalem road by es Salt, but passes through a sparsely populated part of the country.

Following the Amman-Madaba road, after the bridge, the road turns right at the outskirts of the city, to continue through a fertile countryside.

Km. 12. Right, road to Suweileh.

Km 15. *Na'ur*. A pleasant village partly Circassian. The population is: Moslems, Christians, mainly Latins, with some Melkites. About half the population are refugees. Founded in 1778 by the Circassians, many Christians from Madaba, Fuheis and es Salt moved in later. In 1924 was erected a Latin parish, and a new church (1955-56), a gift of the Syrian family Mamarbachi, was erected. The Rosary Sisters arrived in 1951.

Na'ur is identified with *Abel-Keramin*, (district of vineyards), mentioned in Judges 11,33. Isaias (16,8-9) mentions vineyards in this district, and even today grapes grow there.

A main road, leading to Petra, branches off on the left. After 8 kms. *Umm el Basatin*, with columns and remains of a building. After 11 kms you meet the Amman-Madaba road which is crossed to continue on the new road to Ma'an-Petra.

St. Epiphanius (Haer. 12: PG 41, 1012) speaks of Valesians at Bacathos near Philadelphia. The site is identified with Bakata near *Na'ur*. Taking the road to Ain Scita (with many caves still in use), and passing by Ain Murassas, you then take a path to reach Ain Bakata, where there are many caves, which were originally kokhim tombs. Juvenal appointed a bishop of Bacatha in the 5th cent. The site of the village must be one of the Khirbehs around: Kh. er Ramleh, Kh. Kareiat el Mansur or Muterret el Heyaya (cfr. Bagat-

ti, *Lib. Ann.* XI, p. 308; Gese and Rendtoff in *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästinavereins* 1958, p. 60; 1960, p. 131).

Km 17. Road to Hisban and Madaba, 20 kms.

The road begins the descent along the mountain flanks, having to one side *Wadi Na'ur* (km 24). Here terminates *Wadi es Sir*, which begins to the north of *Iraq el Amir*.

Km 26. A little farther on is *Adasiya* with dolmens and ancient burial caves. A dolmen is a box-like structure made of a flat slab laid upon smaller slabs set upright. A path descending into *Wadi Na'ur* leads to *Iraq el Amir* after about 6 kms.

Km 34. Sea level.

Km 36. Dolmens to the left. Panorama of the mountains of Moab, and among them the conical shaped *Siagha*, which is Mount-Nebo. In front a vast view of the Plains of Moab.

Km 37. Tell Iktanu to the right. Road crosses *Wadi Hisban*.

A new road leading to Mt. Nebo begins here.

Km 40. On the right, road to Shuneh by *Shagur*.

Km 45. Path to *Teleilat Ghassul*.

From 1928-38 the Jesuit Fathers (Mallon and Koeppel) excavated this site which revealed the ruins of four towns, one built over the other. The first belonged to the Neolithic period, beginning before 4000 B.C., the last to the Chalcolithic period about 3.500 B.C. The culture is called, on account of its importance, *Ghassulian*, and has now been linked up with a corresponding culture, first revealed in *Jericho* in 1935-36 and more clearly in 1952-8 and in other parts of the country.

In 1958-60 Fr. North continued the excavations for the Pontifical Institute. He has definitely revealed a civilization going back to the Chalcolithic age, more than 1,500 years before Abraham, which precludes all possibility of identifying these small mounds with the ruins of the pentapolis to which Sodom and Gomorrha belonged.

It was a village of some size, with houses of sun-dried bricks on a stone foundation. The roofs were probably of wood, reeds and mud, as are many house today in the Jordan valley. Some houses were plastered and painted in bright colours with representations of men, stars, animals and geometrical motifs. Women decorated themselves with beads of shell and stone, and men, if the paintings are interpreted aright, were bearded and tattooed. Amman Museum and the small one at Third Station in Jerusalem have exhibits. Human remains have been found buried in jars (cfr. *Rev. Bibl.* X, 1963 cfr. also *Ghassul's new found Jar incision*, North ADAJ 8-9 (1964). Henessy carried on further excavations from 1968 to 1974.

Km 46. A road on the left to *Sweima*.

Khirbet Suweima is the site of an ancient city. About 1 km to the east is 'Ain *Suweima*. Farther off to the east is *Tell el 'Udheimi*, and beside it are the dolmens in *Wadi el 'Udheimi*, *Suweima* is only 2 kms northeast of the Dead Sea.

Km 50. Abdallah Bridge, the new bridge (1959) over the Jordan River on the ancient *El Henu* fort.

Km 61. Road on the right to the Dead Sea.

Km 62. Road to Jericho.

The main road continues to Jerusalem.

Amman — River Jordan

through Salt: Kms 60

The road, on leaving Amman, turns north-west, ascending to a fertile plateau.

Km 5. Remains of an Ammonite fort.

Km 10. Experimental Farm at Jubeiha.

Km. 12. On the turn a road goes off on the right to *Um Zuweitna* and *Yazuz*. Immediately on the right of this road is *El Jubeiha*, which is identified with *Jogbehah* of N 32, 35; Jg 8,11.

Km 13. *Suweileh*, majority moslems (few Christians). It is one of the Circassian villages founded by Sultan Abdul Hamid in 1878. To the right is the plain of *Buqeia*, through which runs the main road to Jarash (kms 44). To the left is a road to *Na'ur* (see p. 84). After Suweileh you begin to descend.

Km 15. A road leads off on left to *El Alali* and *Fuheis*, the latter is the town proper (Christian majority) and the former is a new part of the town which has grown up around the cement factory erected in 1953.

There is a Greek Orthodox Church, a Melkite Church, a Latin Church (1874) with schools, Rosary Sisters (1886), Government School, and School for refugees. Latins have also Church-School (1961) in *El Alali*.

A track, good for a jeep, goes over the hills to *Wadi es Sir*: also to *Mahis*, where are found kaolin (china clay) and ochre.

Km 28. Road on right to the Jordan Valley.

Km 29. *Es Salt* (minority Christian). *Es Salt* is the administrative centre of the Balqa District, which has a population of 114,000 of whom 5,265 are Christians. The District stretches from the Zarqa River to the Dead Sea, the chief towns being *Salt*, *Abu N'aim*, *Jufa*, *Deir 'Alla*, *Rama* *Sakneh*, *Shuna Janubiya*, *Fuheis*, *Mahis*.

The name Salt seems to be derived from the Latin word *saltus* (a wooded valley). The tombs in the area prove that it was an ancient site. In the Byzantine period it was known as *Saltos Hieraticon*, and was the seat of a bishop. The region around Salt was explored in 1937 by the Dominican Fathers de Vaux and Benoit. See *R.B.* (1938) p. 398-425.

The town is situated on the slopes of several hills, on one of whose stands the ruined fortress built on more ancient foundations in 1220 by the Mamluk Sultan al Malik al Mu'az-zam. Destroyed by the Mongols in 1260, it was rebuilt by the Sultan Baybars in 1261. Ibrahim Pasha in 1840 razed the buildings to the ground and in 1870 the Turks built the present barracks. During the Turkish period Salt was the chief town of Transjordan.

Following the road that leads through the town and continues to the Jordan valley, one arrives after a few kms to a path on the left which leads up to the summit of *Jebel Yusha'*, 113 ms above sea level. The shrine on the top is the tomb of the prophet Osea (Hosea), according to Moslem tradition. Within the mosque is a very long tomb covered over with coloured materials.

The view over the Jordan Valley and the mountains beyond as far as Garizim and Ebal is simply splendid. The road continues down to the Jordan Valley.

At es Salt are a Greek Orthodox Church, a Latin Church (1866), Rosary Sisters (1887). It was the first Latin Church in Transjordan. There is a Melkite Church. The Protestants have a Mission there since 1847. (cfr. *Le Moniteur Diocésain* July 1954 : Abel, *Géogr. de la Pal.* II, p. 174. Médebielle, *Salt, Histoire d'une Mission*, 1956).

Continuing down the valley amid leafy gardens, after one km one reaches *Ain el Jadur*, near which, according to Moslem tradition, is the tomb of Gad. *Tell Jadur* above the spring is identified with *Gadara*, the capital of the

Perea at the time of Christ, not to be confused with Gadara, a city of the Decapolis, the present Umm Qeis.

Km 30. *Ain Farkh wa Dik* (Hen and Cock Fountain).

Km 31. *Ain Hasir*, next to which is Khirbet Jassir, which may be identified with the Biblical town of *Jazer* of the tribe of Gad (cfr. N 21, 32; 21, 1; 3, 35; Js 13, 25; 21, 26; 2 S 24, 6; 1 Ch 6, 63; 26, 31; Is 16, 8, 9; Jr 48: 32). Eusebius in his *Onomasticon* attempts to define the location of *Jazer*. Père de Vaux (*R. B* 1938) is for *Khirbet Jassir*, while Glueck (*Explorations*) is for *Khirbet Sār*, some 9 kms west of Amman, overlooking Wadi esh Shitā. A new site has been suggested lately by G. M. Landes (cfr. *BASOR* No. 30-31): it is *Khirbet es Sireh*, 2 kms northwest of *Khirbet Sār*: adjacent is a large spring *Ain es Sir*, which flows into Wadi Sir and enters the river Jordan through Wadi Kufrein. North in *Palästinajahrbuch* 34 (1938) had suggested *Khirbet Sār* as the site of the biblical *Ramoth-Mizpath* (*Jos.* 13,26).

Km 40. At Shu'eib Bridge, one turns to the south side, having rounded the "moving mountain".

Km 39. Government nursery.

Km 41. Bridge at Wadi Hudeidun.

Km. 45. Sea level.

You continue along the south side of the Wadi Shu'eib, with its great profusion of low oleanders. Shu'eib to the Arabs was the biblical Jethroe, the father-in-law of Moses.

Km 51.5. Bridge over Wadi Jaria.

Just before you reach the bridge, on your right beyond the wadi is *Tell Bileibil*: on the left of Wadi Jaria are caves which one time formed part of a hermitage (*RB* 1931, p. 215). The road then cuts through *Tell el Mustah*. These two tells are explained later.

Km 53. *Shunat Nimrin* (also called Shuna Janubiya, to distinguish it from Shunat Gharbiyah). The village is the headquarters of the Adwan tribe. Beyond the village to the left is the winter Royal Palace.

Behind the village is *Tell Nimrin*.

Shuna is the centre of the Qadha Shuneh el Janubiya, within the Muhafaza of Balqa.

Plains of Moab

We are now in the midst of the *Plains of Moab*, often mentioned in the Bible: "And they (the Israelites) camped by the Jordan, from Beth-Jeshimoth to Abel-Shittim in the Plains of Moab" (Nb 33,49).

All the important towns in the Plains of Moab were situated in strong positions to guard the strategic points where the precious streams emerged from the hills. These streams were, under the modern names, Wadi Nimrin (farther east known as Wadi Shu'eib), the Wadi el Kafrein, the Wadi er Rama (which in the hills is called Wadi Hisban and runs later into Wadi el Kafrein) and the Wadi el 'Udheimi.

In the 6th century B.C., the towns moved from the hilltops lower down the streams to the plain, and in Hellenistic and Roman times new towns grew up with the old names, slightly changed. Beth Nimrah (Nb 32, 36; Jos 13, 27), which stood about one mile farther east of the present *Tell Nimrin* (to the right beyond the village), was abandoned and the new town grew up and was called in Greek and Talmudic sources Beth Nambris and Nimrin or Nimri. The original Beth Nimrah can now be identified with Tell Bileibil and at a later date with Tell Mustah to the south of Tell Bileibil.

Abel-Shittim: the original site was probably at *Tell el Hammam*. It then moved to *Tell Kafrein*, which is the Biblical site. The Roman town, under the name *Abila*, moved to another site. The name has disappeared, but by means

of archaeological finds it can be identified with *Khirbet Kafrein*.

Bet-Haram (Nb 32, 36) originally a hill fortress, at Tell Iktanu (Iktanival), near to the foot of the Moab mountains, 3 km south of Tell er Rama, was transferred to the plain under the name *Beth-Aramphta* or *Beth-Ramtha*, in Hellenistic-Roman times. Herod the Great built a palace here which in 4 B.C. was burnt down. Herod Antipas rebuilt it and called it *Livias* in honour of Augustus' wife. Subsequently the name was changed to *Julias*, when on Augustus' death, Livia was adopted into the Julian gens and henceforth assumed the name of Julia Augusta. The name *Livias* survived until the 6th century A.D. But the ancient name always remained with the native Aramaic-speaking population, and in time the old name, related to *Beth-Haram*, reappeared in the present Arabic name of the site, *Tell er Rama*¹. In Byzantine times it was an important centre of Christianity. 4 kms to the northeast were the famous *Baths of Livia or Moses' Waters*.

A site more ancient than any of the above is that to-day known as Tuleilat el Ghusul, whose ancient name is unknown.

Beth-Jeshimoth (Nb 33, 49; Jos 13, 20), the ancient Biblical site, is to be identified with Tell el 'Udheimi, several kms. east of *Khirbet Suweima*, and near to the foot of the mountains, on a hill commanding the outlet of the waters of Wadi el 'Udheimi. The name *Beth-Jeshimoth*, when transferred to the new site in the plain became known as *Bezemoth*, also written *Bethsimuth* or *Isimuth*. *Khirbet Suweima* is its modern arabised version. In Roman times it had grown into an important town. It was captured together with other

¹ For further information on *Livias* see "The Memorial of Moses, p. 334. See *BASOR*, 91 (1943) 7-26 for map and description of Plains of Moab.

towns in the Plains of Moab by Placidus, one of the generals of Vespasian (soon to become Emperor of Rome), as Josephus reports (*The Jewish Wars*, 4, 7, 6): "Placidus took Abila and Julias and Bezemoth, and all (the cities) that lay as far as the lake Asphaltidis", as the Dead Sea was then called.

Location of the above sites

Before reaching the village we have seen *Tell Bileibil* and *Tell el Mustah*. After the village is *Tell Nimrin*, and after 1 km a road runs south for 10 kms through cultivated lands to reach the Amman-Jerusalem road.

After 5 kms on this road you reach *Kafrein*. The name *Kafrein* (two villages) justifies the two sites *Tell* and *Khirbet Kafrein*.

Before reaching *Khirbet Kafrein* you turn left to *Tell Kafrein*, a fairly high hill with a cemetery on the top. Leaving the tell on your right you follow the track in a southeasterly direction for 3 kms. to *Tell Tahunah*. From here you cross the wadi to reach *Tell el Hammam*. Return by the same road and continue to *Khirbet Kafrein*, which has no ruins.

The road continues south over Wadi Kafrein, and after crossing *Wadi er Rama*, you come to *Shaghur* on the left and *Tell er Rama* on the right, also covered by a cemetery.

South of the tell at 1 km is *Mazar*, where in the middle of a cemetery you can see columns and capitals lying about, which show that it was the site of a Byzantine church. This and the nearby Shaghur is undoubtedly the site of the Hellenistic-Roman town, rather than the early site of the tell. 3 kms southeast of Shaghur is *Tell Iktanu* (or *Iktaniva*) on the Wadi Hisban.

After 1 km you reach the main road. For Beth-Jeshimoth you run along the Jerusalem road to find a track to Suweima.

Continuation of the road Amman-Jerusalem

Km 54. Resettlement area. The road runs along the Wadi Nimrin, mentioned in Is 15,16 and Jr 48:34, and on both occasions to foretell that the waters would fail¹.

Km. 58. On the other side of the wadi, to your right, is *Tell et Tawil* or *Gharaba*. On the summit are the remains of a small fort, and trenches from World War I. To the north-west on two lower hills are the remains of several rectangular buildings. Roman, Byzantine and Arab pottery abounds. About 3 kms to the east is a spring. This is considered by some to be the site of "Bethania beyond the Jordan where John was baptising" (John I, 1, 19-28). The site is called *Tell Medesh* by these authors, but the name *Méadesh* is today applied only to the cultivated land in the wadi (See Baldi in *La Terra Santa*, Mar. Ap. 1947).

Km 60. *King Hussein Bridge*, a metal bridge built in 1946. Before 1948 it was the frontier between Palestine and Transjordan and was known as Allenby Bridge: it was originally better known as *Jisr el Roraniyeh*.

Before reaching the Bridge, there is a track on the left that leads to *Wadi Kharrar*, where tradition has always placed *Bethania beyond the Jordan*. There also is *Jebel Mar Elyas*, identified with the place where Elias was taken into heaven.

"These things were done in Betania beyond the Jordan, where John was baptising" (John 1,28). Origine (185-254) found Bethany mentioned in almost all the MSS, but he was convinced that Bethany should be read *Bethabara*, which was a place shown on the banks of the Jordan. *Bet 'abārah* means *house of the crossing*.

¹ About 2 kms, west of Shuna, on the southern side of Wadi Nimrin is *Gharubba*, with Neolithic culture, cfr, ADAJ 3 (1956) 24-40.

The site of the crossing by the Israelites under Joshua is fixed at the same place as the Baptism of Jesus, and it is certainly the most probable of the fords suggested. The place is directly opposite Jericho and the land on both sides of the ford is more suitable than elsewhere for the crossing of a big number. Ancient tradition accords with this. The very name carried on the tradition, as we see from Origine. But some think that Origine is referring to Bēt-bārāh (also Beth-Bera), of Jg 7,24 which was definitely a water course. This supposition is not necessary. Egeria (385) gives evidence of this for she crosses the Jordan at this exact point on the way to Livias. Monastery of St. John was not there yet, but she did see the altar, on higher ground on the west bank, raised by Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasses. This is located by the Georgian Calendar: "At mount Ruvel (= Reuben) in St. John's, memory of the prophet Eliseus" (June 14). Eliseus was connected, as we shall see, with the traditional place of the baptism and therefore naturally the memory of the prophet was recorded in the Church of St. John. Therefore at this time, the passage of the Israelites was fixed opposite St. John's Convent. And very probably the Jews called the place Beth 'Aabarah. And this tradition is probably carried on by the traditional name given to St. John's by the Arabs, namely, *Qasr el-Yehud*, Castle of the Jews.

Then there is the tradition of St. Elias. As traditionalist Elias would have followed on his last journey the way consecrated by many holy memories. And in fact tradition has always pointed out the place of his assumption on a small hill at the beginning of Wadi Kharrar, less than 2 Kms northeast of the Jordan, and the ford in front of St. John's is the one most indicated.

The question of Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John preached, and the place of the baptism of Jesus must now be determined.

John was baptizing in Bethany, which was undoubtedly on the east bank of the Jordan. Although Bethany is usually taken to mean *Beth-ananiah*, the house of Anania, a man's name, still it could be also *bēt an-niyyāh*, house of the boat. Bethany, however, was not just a ford, it was a village, some place beyond the Jor-

dan: "(Jesus) went back again to the far side of the Jordan to stay in the district where John had once been baptizing. Many people came to him". (John 10, 40-42). This followed the attempt to stone Him in Jerusalem, during the feast of the Dedication. It is plain then that there were two Bethanies, as there were two Bethlehems.

Bethany must be sought in the Wadi el Kharrar, where from five or six partly sweet, partly salt, springs, comes a stream that flows into the Jordan. As Dalman says: "Beth Ainon or Beth Enayim (Beth Enayya) might be the correct name, a name which was changed to Bethany in St. John's Gospel". The springs are beside the hill known as *Jebel mar Elyās* (Hill of Elias). In fact the Madaba Map has correctly indicated the springs on the other side of the Jordan. The place was once called Ainon i.e. *Place of a Spring*, but now in Aramaic *Saphsaphas* that is, the *Willow*. Anyhow, by the 3rd cent. the name Bethany, as such, has disappeared.

The Pilgrim of Bordeaux (333) tells us that the place where Jesus was baptized by John was 5 miles from the Dead Sea which suits the present site opposite St. John's. "There too is the place above the river, a hillock on that bank, where Elias was taken up into heaven". The hillock, *Jebel Mar Elyās*, is well known and is less than 2 kms north-east of the Jordan in the Wadi el Kharrar.

St. Jerome placed the baptism of Jesus at the ford where the Jews crossed under Joshua and where Elias and Eliseus passed dry shod over the Jordan. Therefore, a historic ford. And John chose this place and began to act "in the spirit and power of an Elias". Its historical memories gave it a significance for the Baptist, for although he was not Elias (John 1,21), he did take up the work of Elias (Mt 11,14; Mk 9,12) in order to raise up a new Israel from the Jordan. The Gospels stress that the Baptist wanted to act in the spirit of Elias; and he even imitated the hairy dress of the prophet. And the people who came to this ford were not merchants, but Jews attracted by the sacred path of the patriarchs and the prophets, men ready to open their hearts to the voice of one crying in the desert.

The “*Vita S. Mariae Aegyptiae*” mentions that she visited the “temple of John the Baptist which is close to the Jordan”. Since she died between 421 and 432 this may be a case of projecting later circumstances back into a former period, and something less than a temple marked the site.

Theodosius (530) says that in the place where the Lord was baptised there was a marble column, and in the column an iron cross: there also was the church of St. John the Baptist, which the Emperor Anastasius built: which church was built high over arches on account of the rising waters of the Jordan: in which monks lived, and these received a yearly grant from the State.

The Emperor Anastasius ruled 491-518, therefore this church, on the east bank, was erected about 500.

Theodosius continues: “where the Lord was baptized beyond the Jordan, there is a small mound, which is called Armona: here Elias was taken up”. Pious belief took the name *Armona* from Psalm 41,7: “Within me my soul is downcast; so will I remember you, from the land of the Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Misar”. In the LXX this was “*Jordan and Hermoniim, from the little hill*”. The plural *Hermoniim*, in place of *Hermon*, gave rise to several places being called *Hermon*.

So far all the texts show that the buildings were on the east side of the Jordan. But Antoninus (570) did not see any church, but only a pillar surrounded by a fence. The church of Anastasius had probably been washed away, and later a small one was built. Up till 1900 there were ruins of a church on the east bank, 54 yards northeast of the ford. Since then they have been washed away. Farther east was another Greek shrine, a square chapel, never finished which the Greeks had wished to dedicate to St. Mary of Egypt. It was completely destroyed in the earthquake of 1927, and then the local Arabs removed all the stones. It had four acanthus capitals probably from the church which when destroyed by the flood, was replaced by the second smaller one.

Something happened at this period, which changed the whole topography connected with the baptism. It is by some explained by supposing that the river bed changed. This does not help the matter, for

the ruins of these early monuments are still to be traced a short distance to the northeast of the ford on the east bank. More probable is the explanation that the Arab penetration and the Persian devastation put an end to the Christian shrines on the east bank, which became unfriendly. In fact the Madaba Map locates Betaraba on the west bank, with the inscription βεθαβαρὰ τὸ τοῦ ἀγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτισμάτος: Bethabara; the (Church) of St. John 'the Baptist. Opposite to it, on the east bank, are the words *Ainon*, which is now *Sapsaphas* (as explained above). After the Arab conquest (638) the west bank became the place of Jesus' baptism. Arculf (670) forms the turning point, who saw on the west edge of the river a "small square church", from which a bridge led down into the river to the very spot of the baptism. At this spot was a high wooden cross reaching up to the neck of a tall man. Little by little the baptism is moved to the Chapel, as by Willrald (724-6) and Daniel (1106). By 1212 the church is "almost completely destroyed" (Wilbrand of Oldenburg). In time the chapel disappeared, and the place of the baptism moved down stream to the Hajlah ford, 1 Km. to the south, and this was the usual for the Russian and Greek pilgrims to enter the river to bathe. When this happened it is difficult to say, but since 1906 the Dead Sea, consequently the Jordan have risen quite a few feet. After 1914, when the Russian pilgrims ceased to come, the Greeks and the Latins changed to the present site opposite the monastery of St. John.

When did the present monastery of St. John come into existence? We cannot say exactly. It existed before the time of Justinian (527-65), and it is shown on the Map of Madaba with the designation: τὸ ποῦ ἀγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτισμάτος. Destroyed by an earthquake it was rebuilt by the Emperor Manuel Comnenus (1143-1180). It was still standing in the 16th cent., but later fell into ruin. It was rebuilt by the Greeks in 1882. The church was again destroyed in the earthquake of July 11, 1937. It was again repaired in 1955, and at present looks like a little fortress.

While the baptism of Jesus changed sites, the place of John's baptism remained fixed beyond the Jordan, although western pilgrims no longer cross the Jordan. Epiphanius (750-800) says that there was a

small fort (castellum), where there was a large church in honour of the H. Trinity; on the river bank was a church of the Baptist, and in the apse of the church was a stone, on which John stood when he baptized Christ. Across the Jordan, at a distance of one mile was the cave where John lived and the spring where he baptized. There was once a church over this cave and a shrine also on the *monticulus* of Elias, but no systematic clearance has been done on these sites to determine the site of the village of Bethany. What little is to be seen on the surface is Byzantine. This archaeological difficulty may be remedied in time. The site is the property of the Greek Orthodox Church. In the meantime the conclusion is permissible that here was the Baptist's base and consequently the Bethany of John 1.28. His preaching and baptizing presuppose a ford. There were several fords on the river. The one most used was probably that to the north, *Roraniyeh* where King Hussein Bridge (the one time Allenby Bridge) now stands: the ford opposite St. John's usually called *El Maghtas*: Makhadet Hajlah further south: and Makhadet el Henu, where the new Abdallah Ibn Hussein Bridge on the Jerusalem-Amman road stands. It was, therefore, with some reason that Féderlin saw the site of Bethany at the site which he called Tell el-Medesh. He was backed by A. Barrois and M.-J. Lagrange. It runs contrary to tradition and archaeology.

Before reaching Shūnat Nimrin, at km 52 a signpost points to the north along a road that travels parallel to the Jordan River.

The irrigated Plains of Moab formed the best part of the Province of Peraea or Perea — "the land beyond" (the Jordan) as it was called by the Greeks. It covered in great part the division of land claimed for the two tribes, Reuben and Gad, and in part was Gilead and in part Ammon. It extended from Ma-chaerus in the south, to Pella in the north, and in breadth extended from the Jordan to about half way to Philadelphia. Together with Galilee it was given to Herod Antipas by the will of

Herod the Great, in which he divided his kingdom among his 3 sons. He ruled it for 42 years from 4 B.C. till 39 A.D. when he was banished by Caligula. At this period the territory of Perea stretched along the north half of the east side of the Dead Sea and along the east side of the River Jordan as far as the boundaries of Pella. Abila and Livias were the seats of the southermost subsections or toparchies of Perea, and Machaerus was the southermost fortress town. Later these toparchies were given by Nero to Agrippa II, having been previously annexed by Rome, after the death of Agrippa I.

It was thought that John the Baptist should have laboured beyond Jordan at Betania (John 1:28) and lived in the land of Perea and that Jesus should have sojourned there too (cfr. John 1,28; Mathew 19,1; Mark 10,1; John 10,40; 3,26), because this was in great part a purely Jewish land. So much so, in fact, that when the Jews of Galilee wanted to come on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, they chose to come by Perea rather than pass through Samaria, which was heretical and inhospitable. See Luke 9,51, where the Samaritans refused to receive him into one of their cities. The Galileans would ford the Jordan probably near Scythopolis (Beisan) and recross it opposite Jericho.

And some of the most beautiful of the teachings of Jesus were heard beyond the Jordan. It was here he declared that Matrimony was indissoluble (Mt 19, 3-9); here He recommended the making one's self a eunuch for the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt 19, 10-12).

"Then were little children presented to him, that he should impose hands upon them and pray. And the disciples rebuked them. And Jesus said to them: Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come to me, for the kingdom of heaven is for such" (Mt 19, 13-14).

Here it was that the rich young man asked: "Good master, what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting"? Which gave rise

to the terrible warning. "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 19,24).

He speaks not of impossibility, but of difficulty, and expresses it with an adaptation of the Jewish proverb: "a man even in his dreams does not see an elephant pass through a needle's eye".

From Shuna to Pella

Km 52. — Turning left, if coming from Jericho.

Km 57. — Underground water works used in Roman and Byzantine times.

Km 60. — Kerameh Refugee Camp.

Km 75. — Left to Jisr Damieh: on the right begin dolmens to appear.

After 7 kms you come to *Damiya Bridge* over the Jordan. Damiya preserves the name of the biblical Adama (Jos 3:16). Dominating the rich land on the left is a small mound called *Tell Damiya*, which marks the site of the Biblical town. It guarded a ford over the Jordan, where later a Roman bridge was built, remains of which are visible beside the modern bridge.

If you wish to cross the Jordan, you may continue the interesting route to Jericho 42 kms or to Nablus, 38 kms.

Km 80. — A road on the right to Salt and Amman (65 kms).

Km 85. — Bridge over the Zarqa River, this is the Biblical Jabbok, which was a notable boundary. Going upstream, two sites are still to be located for certain. One is *Phanuel* (Face of God), where Jacob struggled with an angel and this may be identified with *Tulul edh Dhahab* (Hills of Gold): the other is *Mahanaim*, still higher up, and to which David fled when his son Absalom revolted (2 S

17, 24)¹.

The German Evangelical Institute, making surface survey, claims that Phanuel is to be identified with Tulul edh Dhahab, and Mahanaim with *Tell Hajjaj* (see *ADAJ* VI, 1962). Some, however, place Mahanaim at *Khirbet el Mahneh* above Ajlun, also called Mihna.

Going downstream, at the confluence of the Jabbok and the Jordan, in the space between, are two ancient sites, whose early names and history are unknown: they are *Khirbet Um Hamad Sherqi* and *Khirbet Um Hamad Gharbi*: they show that they were inhabited in the Middle Bronze (2100-1900) and in the Early Iron Ages (13th to 6th cent.) See *BASOR* 97, 10-22 and 100, 7-16.

Km 86. — *Tell Deir 'Alla*, which can be seen from a good distance and which is the site of the ancient Succoth. Here Jacob rested, coming from Penuel where he had wrestled with an angel, and where he was reconciled with Esau (Gn 32 and 33). Jacob named it Succoth, that is, booths or tents. It is mentioned

¹ To Mahanaim David fled, to the same place to which Ishosheth, the sole surviving son of Saul had once fled from David, when David seized the crown in Hebron in usurpation of royal rights. Fleeing from his own rebellious son Absalom, he must have thought of the son of Saul. "And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbath... and Machir... and Barzillai... brought him beds, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley and meat... and honey and butter and cheese of the herd".

Absalom's army crossed the Jordan but was defeated by the faithful forces of David. Absalom, fleeing for his life, through the thick woods of Gilead, his mule went under a great oak and his hair caught in the boughs and he was left hanging. David's general, Joab, pierced his heart with darts, and David on hearing the news sat between the gates of Mahanaim and raised a lament to heaven (25 18).

with Zaphon by Joshua as a place well known (13,27). Because the people of Succoth and Penuel refused food to Gideon and his men, he fulfilled his threat: "I will thresh your flesh with the thorns and briars of the desert" (Judges, 8:7).

Excavations in 1960, '61, '62, '64, have been carried out at Succoth by Dr. Franken of a Dutch Society¹. The results, with photographs, have been published in *Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. X (1960) and Vol. XI (1961). He discovered a temple, isolated on a mound; one of the largest ever found in the area; it was in use from 1600 to 1200 B.C. In the temple were found a very interesting shrine, figurines and incense burners. East of the temple in another building another small shrine was found. Also found was a faience jar with the cartouche of twofer (1199-91 B.C.).

About a mile and half west of Deir 'Alla is *Tell el Khisas*, also meaning mount of booths, and it is an example of how a name moves from one place to another after the destruction of the first place.

At Deir 'Alla there is an Agricultural Research Station of the Jordan Ministry of Agriculture. Here Mr. Trought has worked for many years on experimental work to increase agricultural production. His aims were: (a) the improvement of existing crops through the introduction of superior varieties or increasing the yield by better cultivation; (b) trying new types of crops to increase exports and decrease imports; (c) testing local and foreign kinds of forage and fodder crops to enable a community of small holders of land to be self sufficient in the production of milk and meat.

Km 40. — *Wadi Rajib*, which takes its name from the town higher up the wadi, *Rajib* (Ragaba). To the right is *Tell 'Amta*, the an-

¹ Sponsored by Dutch Organization for the Advancement of Pure Scientific Research (Z.W.O.).

cient *Amathus*, one of the towns of the Perea, which the Proconsul Gabinius made the site of a local council. Josephus (*Ant.* 13,13,3) tells us that after Alexander Jannaeus had taken Gadara, "he took also Amathus, a very strong fortress belonging to the inhabitants above Jordan, where Theodorus, the son of Zeno, had his chief treasure". This Zeno fell unexpectedly upon the Jews, slew ten thousand of them, and sized property and Alexander's baggage. Alexander attacked Theodorus, who fled, and demolished Amathus (*Ant.* 13, 13,5). During the rebellion of Simon against the Romans, the palace at Amathus was burned down by the mob (*Ant.* 17,10,6). In Byzantine times it was the seat of a bishop, but no Christian remains exist. Idrisi in 1154 counts it with Jericho and Beisan the most beautiful town in the Ghor. A little to the northeast of Tell 'Amta is *Tell Qos*, which is the Biblical *Zaphon*, where the Ephraimites were defeated by Jephte the Gaalite (*Jg* 12,4) who also defeated Ammon in war (*Jug.* 11,21). Tell Qos is on a high flat-topped isolated hill, near the outlet of the wadi from the hills. It was probably an early sanctuary of Baal-Zaphon before Jehovah was worshipped there.

Km 91. — *Kureiyima*, which is on *Wadi Kufrinja*, which takes its name from the town higher up, *Kufrinja* (some Christians). The river itself rises at Ain Janna, east of Ajlun. Away to the left and on the south side of the wadi is Tell es-Sa'idiyeh which is to be identified with Zarethan. When the Israelites were crossing the Jordan "the waters coming from upstream stood still, forming a single solid mass, reaching (northwards) from Adamah (Damiya) as far as the fortress (*mezed*) of Zarethan" (*3, 15-16).*

In the fields between Succoth and Zarethan were the foundries where Hiram of Tyre, Solomon's master coppersmith, cast the vessels and capitals for the Temple (1 Kings 7, 46-47). Iron ore was mined in the Ajlun area and

charcoal was got from the forests of Gilead. Great slag heaps can still be seen in the vicinity of Ajlun. Some ore was brought from the Wadi 'Araba, where smelting was carried on a larger scale.

Tell es Sa'idiyeh (Hill of the Women of the Sa'id Tribe) was excavated in 1964 by J.B. Pritchard for the University of Pennsylvania. Pits were sunk in 3 areas: 1) northwest sector of Tell; 2) north side of Tell; 3) sounding on north side of the bench. Early Bronze, Late and the Iron Age up to the 9th cent. B.C. are represented. The last city to occupy the mound was abandoned about 700 B.C. Below it was an earlier city, probably the Zarethan of Solomon's time, and many items of bronze were found, as cauldrons and bowls. Most interesting is the stairway of 125 steps leading down to the spring, used in time of siege. On the lower part of the mound was found a mud-walled tomb, with a skeleton of a woman, with rich grave goods all around her. She must have died about 1200 B.C., about the time that Joshua stormed the Promised Land. See *ADAJ* (1964) 8,9, for Preliminary Report.

Before Wadi el Yabis on the right are *Turkman Zuweitina* (*Yabis*).

Km. 111. *Wadi el Yabis*. On the north side of the Wadi is Tell el-Meqbereh (Burial Place) and Tell Abu Kharaz, close together and forming one site, which is identified with the ancient *Jabesh Gilaad*.

When the tribe of Benjamin, because some of them had maltreated the Levite concubine (Jg 21, 8), was wiped out except for the 600 men who took refuge in the Rock Remmon (now Rammun); the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilaad, because they failed to join the expedition against the tribe of Benjamin, were put to the sword, all except the virgins who numbered 400, who were then given as wives to the children of Benjamin in Remmon (Jg 21). The other

200 stole wives for themselves from Shiloh. See *BASOR* 89 (1943).

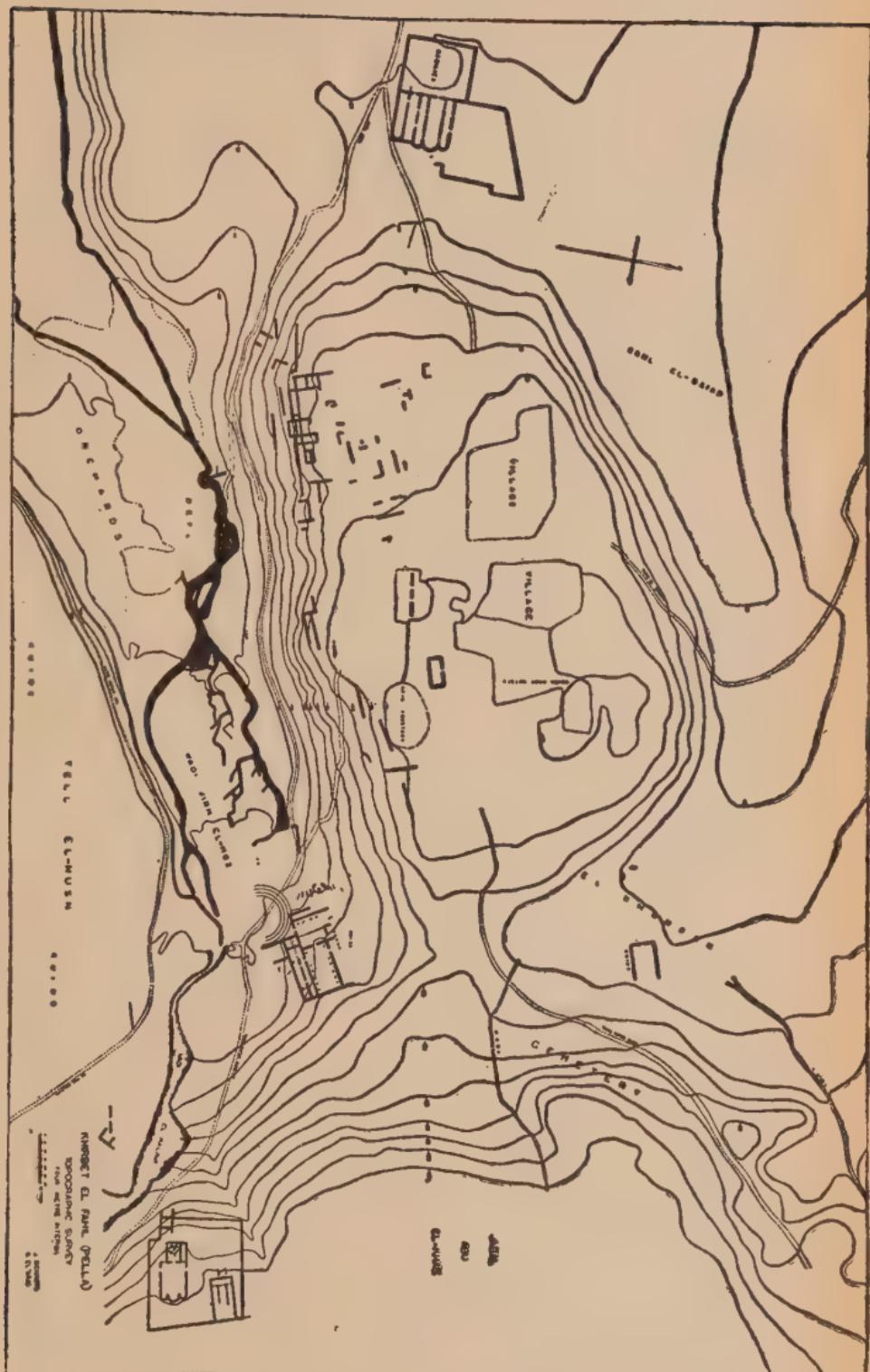
It seems that the place survived, but it must have been very weak, when Saul came to the rescue and saved them from being "a reproach in all Israel" (1 S 11-2). And they did not forget this kindness on the part of Saul, for when the Philistines defeated Israel on Mt. Gelboe and King Saul and his sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Melchisua fell in battle, the men of Jabesh went to Bethsan (Beisan) and took the bodies and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh. And David thanked them for the deed (cfr. 1 S 31; 1-13 1 Ch 10; 1-14).

If you follow the Wadi el Yabis upstream eastwards for a few miles you come to *Tell el Maqlub*, which may be the site of Abel-Meholah, the Vale of Dancing, the home of the prophet Elisha, where he was visited by Elijah also a native of east Jordan (cfr. 1 Kings 19, 19-21). The name may be preserved in the nearby village of Kufr Abil, although most authors have followed Eusebius who places it at Bethmaela, 10 Roman miles south of Beisan. In this area is also to be sought the brook Cherith.

Km 116. — *Mashari'*. At the end of the village to the right you leave the main road and commence the ascent to the village of *Khirbet el Fahil*. Below the main range of the Jebel Ajlun, yet raised above the Ghor proper, it stands on the Tabaqat or *terraces*. The ancient Pella stood at the southeast corner of his flat tableland. The Census gives the present village the name *Jirm*.

Pella

The area has three clearly marked divisions: (1) Khirbet Fahil, a small mound on which the modern village stands. (2) Tell el Hisn to the south of the Khirbet, separated by Wadi Jirm el Moz, with the spring 'Ain el Jirm. This was undoubtedly the Acropolis



of the ancient city. (3) To the north-east is Jebel Abu el Khas with a cemetery.

The ancient name was Pihilu or Pelel, in Greek it became Pella and in Arabic Fahil.

The earliest mention of Pella is in the Brussels Execration texts which came to light in 1938, and date from the third quarter of the 19th cent. B.C. Pella was then a city sufficiently strong to be included among the enemies of Egypt. It is therefore to be expected that eventual excavation will reveal a Middle Bronze city. References in the Egyptian texts of 15-13 centuries B.C. are many. Of special interest is the letter of Mut-Ba'lu, Prince of Pella, found in the Amarna Tablets (14 cent. B.C.). This Mut-Ba'lu is believed to be the son of Lab'ayu, the Prince of Shechem, who played an important role in the international relations of the period. In the Anastasi Papyrus it is mentioned that Pella and Rehob (Tell es-Saren, c. 6 km south of Beisan) made chariot parts for the Egyptian army. Pella produced poles naturally from the forest east of Pella, which now, thanks to a government reforestation plan, is being renewed. Pella must have declined later, for there is no mention of it in the Old Testament, but it reappeared in Hellenistic-Roman times. It is probable that its rise was due to the settlement of Alexander's soldiers in the time of the Diadochi. No doubt the Macedonians connected Pella in some way with the birth-place of Alexander, it is probably on account of the springs. Polybius says that Antiochus the Great took the city in 218 B.C. after his conquest of Atabyrion (Tabor). By the time of Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.) it had become a strong centre of Hellenistic culture. When Jannaeus tried to conquer and judaize among other cities Pella, the inhabitants preferred the destruction of the city. This was about 80 B.C. Pompey re-established the city which coined its own money, and when the kingdom of Herod the Great was constituted by the Emperor Augustus, Pella with the near-

by Scythopolis (Beisan) was withheld from Herod and came under the legate of the province of Syria. Pella subsequently served to define the northern limit of Perea, and became famous for its spring, mentioned by Pliny (*Natural History* V,16).

In 66 A.D. the Jewish rebels attacked Gerasa, Pella and Scythopolis because they had non-Jewish populations, but how far they succeeded in destroying these cities is not known. Anyhow, Eusebius records in his *Ecclesiastical History* (III 5,3) that the Christians of Jerusalem, being warned of the impending doom, or more probably following the advice of the Divine Master (Mt 24, 16) fled to Pella, as the nearest safe refuge. There is no reason to doubt this statement, which may rest on the writings of Hegesippus (2 cent. A.D.), although it may produce some difficulties. Those who remained behind in Jerusalem, or who had meantime returned, were harshly treated by Bar Kokhba when he entered Jerusalem as victor in 132 A.D. Many of the Christians remained in Pella and in time Pella became a Christian city¹. During the Roman and Byzantine times it was a strong Christian centre,

¹ The question has been raised if these Jewish-Christians are to be identified with the Ebionites. The Ebionites (*poor* in Hebrew) were connected by origin with the Church of Jerusalem: they held that Jewish law was still binding on all Christians: they denied the divinity of Christ and rejected St. Paul as an apostate. They were probably joined by some of the Essenes after 70 A.D. They are very probably to be connected with the Elchasaïtes (*of hidden wisdom*), who in the time of Trajan established themselves on the banks of the Arnon. They were still numerous in the 4th cent. but later disappeared. They are to be distinguished from the Nazarenes, also found east of the Jordan who admitted the divinity of Christ, but also observed the Jewish laws, which, however, they did not lay on others. About 5 kms WNW of Amman, to the left of the Amman-Suweilah road, is Shamsānī, the

and in it flourished Ariston of Pella, who is remembered for his *Dialogue* (now lost) between *Papiscus* (Jew) and Jason (Christian) on the prophesies of the Old Testament. Bishops of Pella are known in the 5th and 6th centuries. There are the ruins of at least four churches on the site.

The Arabs took Pella in Jan. 635, but, unlike many great cities east of the Jordan, it continued to exist, and in the 9th cent. one half the city was still Christian.

The Ruins: Having reached the tableland, on the right a mass of fossilized bones can be seen. The whole area is covered with tombs, many used as stables. A little farther on is a large ruin, which was a Christian basilica divided into three naves, ending in an apse, and surrounded by other buildings. Some bases and columns are still in situ. You may continue to the Arab village where it will be apparent that the ruins have been a convenient quarry in the past. To the east is Gebel Abu el Khas, with numerous tombs.

Going southeast into the Wadi Jirm el Moz, a verdant valley, on the north side of the valley are many buildings, all of which are almost completely erased, but the theatre and a pagan temple are still discernible, and several beautiful pieces of Greek and Roman sculpture are lying about.

Proceeding farther east you come to the ruins of a church, which was part of a monastery, in front of both of which was an atrium, the columns of which are scattered about.

To the south is Tell el Hisn, also covered with ruins.

Some surveys have been made: Schumacher: *Abila, Pella and Ajlun*, P.E.F. 1889. Rich-

inhabitants of which were probably Sun Worshippers (*Shamsani*). It may have been the home of the Sampseites or Elchasaïtes, who St. Epiphanius says were heretics, led by two women, Martha and Marathana (cfr. *LA XI* p. 313). Elechasaïtes is also written Elkashites.

mond: *Khirbet Fahil*, P.E.F. 1934. A good article in *La Terra Santa*, July 1953, by Fr. B. Bagatti, O.F.M.

In 1958 the American School carried out some work there. Two squares were uncovered, one on the north side of the tell at its highest point and the other on a southwestern point of the tell, both near the village. From these foundings it is clear that Pella was occupied in the Early Iron Age: it had a second Century Hellenistic city. Some future excavation may be expected to reveal the history of Pella going back to 3,000 B.C. (see *The Biblical Archaeologist*, No. 4, 1958).

In 1967 the Wooster College Expedition, Ohio (USA) studied the western church where in the absis were reveeled the mosaics and found a sarchofagus. Middle Bronze, Late Bronze Age and Byzantine tombs were excavated in the eastern cemetery. (See R.H. Suits, *Pella of the Decapolis*, vol I, Wooster 1973).

You return to the main road and continue north passing a road on the left to *Jisr Sheikh Hussein*, on the right a road to *Deir Abu Sa'id*, and finally before *Kh. esh Shuna* the main road on the right to Irbid.

Iraq el Amir (Caverns of the Prince)

Iraq el Amir is most easily reached from *Wadi es Sir*, which itself can be reached from Suweileh, or from Amman directly (13 kms), or from the Amman-Jerusalem road.

Wadi es Sir, a pretty village, inhabited mainly by Circassians.

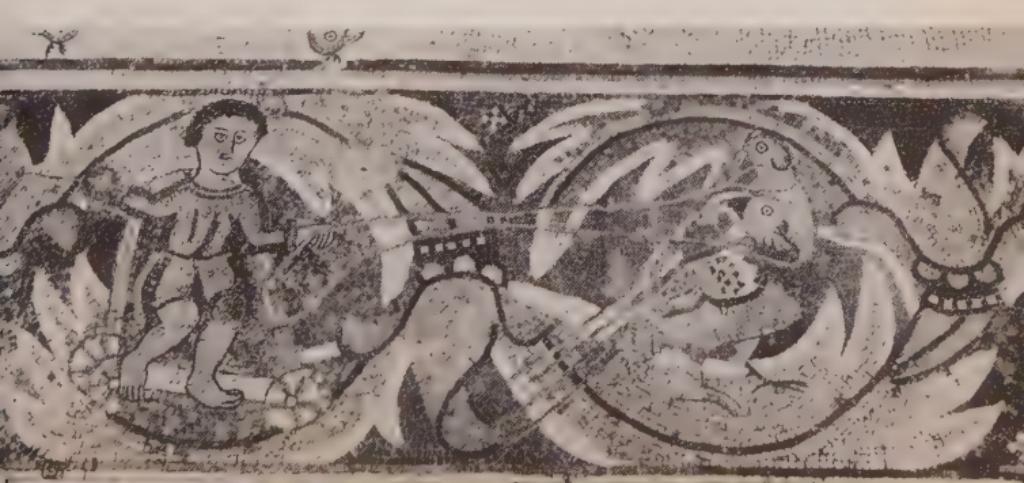
From *Wadi es Sir*, you continue through a beautiful valley to the very fine spring and gardens of *El Bassa* village, from which you follow the valley to *Iraq el Amir*. On the way, on the mountain side to the left, is *ed Deir*, a curious monastery of 3 floors, all cut in the rock. Later on, on the right, is *el Berdaouil* (Baldwin). Baldwin II must have passed this way when he marched against Jarash in 1122. In the gorge lies *Ain el Terābil*, and then *Iraq el Amir*.

Josephus (*Ant.* 12, 4) gives us a description of this place and tells us how about 190 B.C. a certain Hyrcanus, son of Joseph, withdrew here and built this fortress (*Baris*).

"However, Hyrcanus determined not to return to Jerusalem any more, but seated himself beyond Jordan, and was at perpetual war with the Arabians and slew many of them, and took many of them captives. He also erected a strong castle, and built it entirely of white stone to the very roof, and had animals of a prodigious magnitude engraven upon it. He also drew round it a great and deep canal of water. He also made caves of many furlongs in length, by hollowing a rock that was over against him, and then he made large rooms in it, some for feasting, and some for sleeping and living in. He introduced also a vast quantity of waters which ran along it, and which were very delightful and ornamental in the court. But still he made the entrance at the mouth of the caves so narrow, that no more than one person could enter by them at once. And the reason why he built them after that manner was a good one; it was for his own preservation, lest he should be besieged by his brethren, and run the hazard of being caught by them. Moreover, he built courts of greater magnitude than ordinary, which he adorned with vastly larger gardens. And when he had brought the place to this state, he named it Tyre. This place is between Arabia and Judea, beyond Jordan, not far from the country of Heshbon. And he ruled over those parts for seven years, even all the time that Seleucus was King of Syria. But when he was dead, his brother Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes, took the Kingdom. Ptolemy also, the King of Egypt, died, who was besides called Epiphanes. He left two sons, and both young in age; the elder of which was called Philometer, and the youngest Physcon. As for Hyrcanus, when he saw that Antiochus had a great army, and feared lest he should be

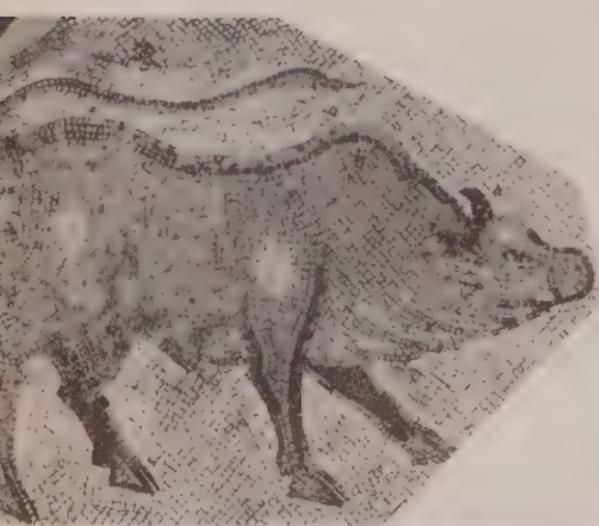


MADABA





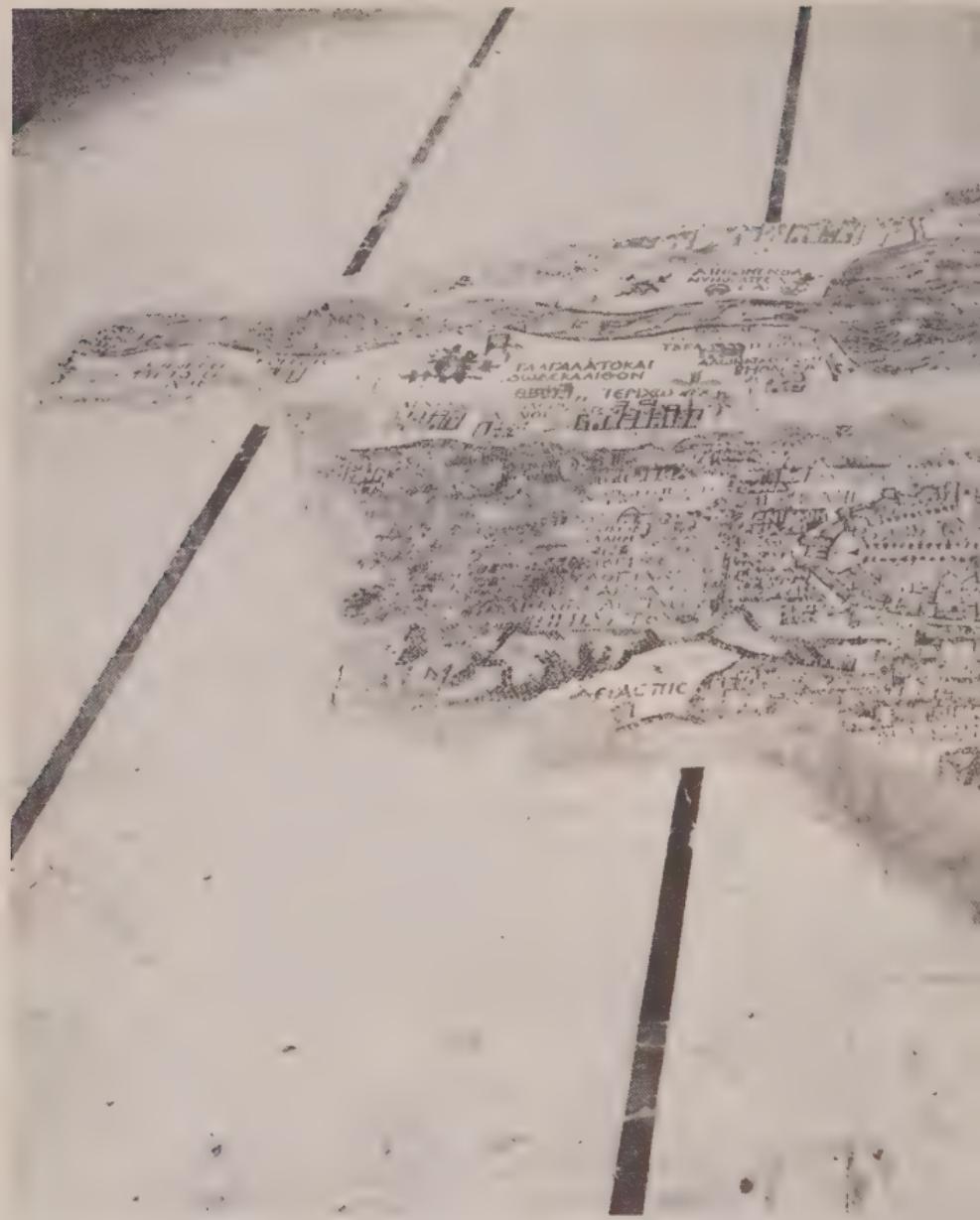
Madaba
Museum





St. Helianos Chapel on the Cardo Maximus
The "Sea" in the Apostles Church





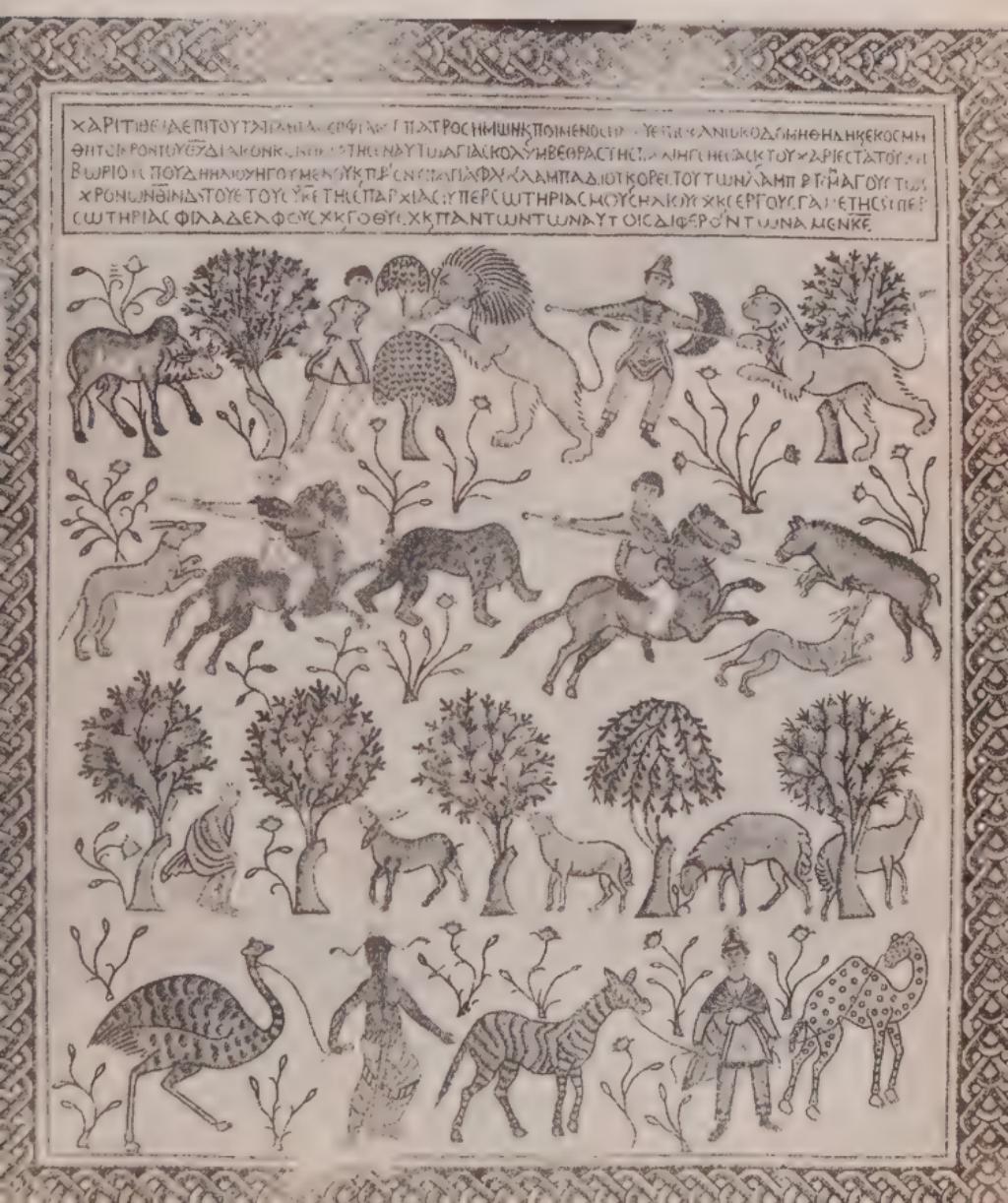
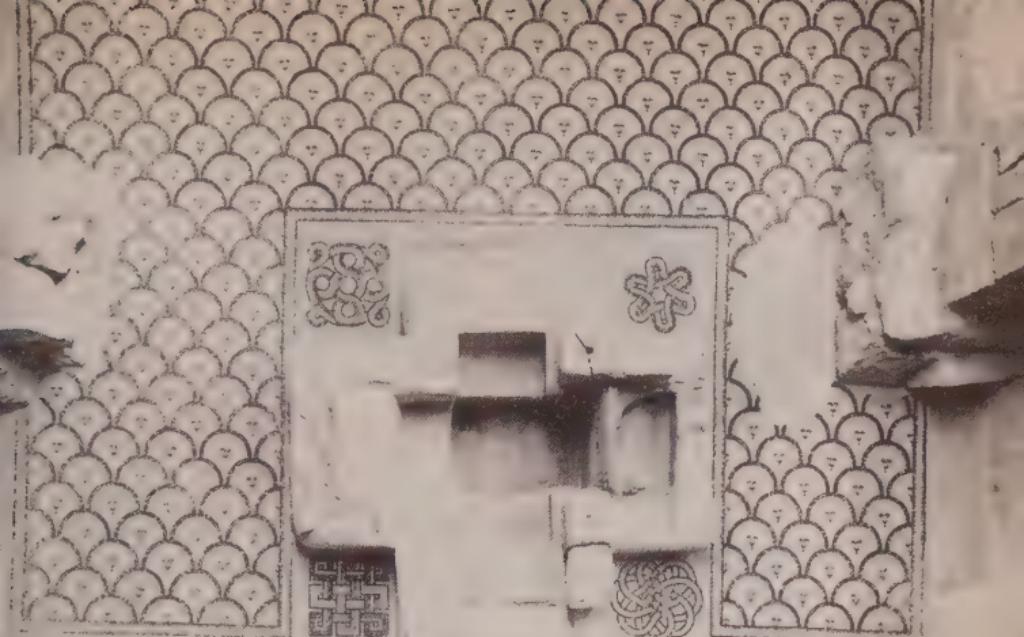


The Madaba Map. The Jordan River



Mount Nebo — The Memorial of Moses







El-Mukhayyet, Church of Sts Lot and Procopius



caught by him, and brought to punishment for what had done to the Arabians, he ended his life, and slew himself with his own hand; while Antiochus seized upon all his substance" (*Ant.* 12, 4).

Despite of what Josephus says this is *Birtha* of Ammonitis, founded 260 B.C. by a local dynast, Tobiah, whose name in Hebrew, to be seen on the face of the caves (Iraq el Emir), is also found in the Zenon papyri from Gerza in Egyptian Faiyum. Zenon was secretary of the finance minister of Ptolemy II. There are two letters from Tubias dated May 12, 259 B.C. in answer to a request for animals: horses dogs, wild asses, Arabian asses: also he mentions "4 well-bred slave boys", two circumcised and two not.

The Tobiah family appears already established in Transjordan at the head of the Ammonites at the end of the 5th cent. Its head is allied with the Arabs and the governor of Samaria. He was related with the high priest Eliashib of Judah and with many noble Jews, while his wife and the wife of his son Jehohanan, were well-born Jewesses (Ne 6, 17-18). He had many friends in Jerusalem, with whom he was in correspondence. His relative, Eliashib, gave him the use of a big stone room in the Temple. But Nehemiah threw out Tobiah's baggage (13: 4-9). Nehemiah describes Tobiah as "the Ammonite slave", but we must take "slave" here in the Biblical sense of "governor" or "official of the king". We conclude then that Tobiah was not an Ammonite, but a Jew, the Persian appointed governor of Ammonite territory.

Later on we know more of the family. A Jew named Joseph, son of a Tobiah and a sister of the high priest, became tax farmer for Coele-Syria and Palestine. He is succeeded by his son Hyrcanus. In a quarrel with his half brothers, Hyrcamus is defeated and retires to the country across the Jordan where he constructs a "Strong fortress". There he commits

suicide.

The Tubias of the Zenon papyri, married to a sister of Onias, the high priest, was the father of Joseph and grandfather of Hyrcanus. This seems a valid conclusion.

The site has two parts. To the north, an escarpment with caves, from which we get the name Iraq (sing. Irq) el Amir. The caves have many rooms in two tiers and long corridors, with a gallery in front of a part of the second storey. The local people use them as stores. One has carved on its external rock the name *Tobiah*. Two hundred and twenty metres from the escarpment is the modern village: between them runs the ancient aqueduct, which is still in use.

To the south is *Qasr el 'Abd* (Castle of the Slave), the fortress proper half a mile south Iraq el-Amir. A modern village on a hill is growing over the site. The whole building has collapsed into itself, due to the method of building. The blocks of stone are huge, some 6 m. long by 3 m high, but less than 0.5 m in thickness. They are set up on end of a narrow edge, and consequently fell at the slightest shock. There was once an enclosure wall around the castle, and on the north is a depression which may have been the lake or moat referred to by Josephus. On the south is a gateway in the enclosed wall and from this a ramp leads up to the cliff. Along the ramp are pairs of upright stones set at regular intervals: their purpose can only be guessed.

The ruins are interesting, showing a mixture of different styles. Rostovtzeff, in "*Social and Economic History of the Hellenic World*" (1950) calls it "the only Hellenistic ruin of great interest in Transjordan".

Speaking of the site Albright says: "Some distance away from this tomb there is a free standing edifice, built of huge drafted stones in a vigorous early Hellenistic style. Below the cornice two well-carved lions advance from the left to meet two others coming from the right. The details of the Corinthian capitals seem to

preclude a date in the third century and to connect this building with Hyrcanus, the last Tobiad, whose building operations are described by Josephus; the structure would then date from about 175 B.C., just before the beginning of the Maccabean Age" (*The Archaeology of Palestine*, p. 149-150).

According to Josephus the name given to the fortress was Tyros (the Greek form of Tyre). Tyros is a transliteration of Aramaic *tura*, Hebrew *sur*, rock or fortress. The Arabs would pronounce it *sir*, and so the fortress gave its name to Wadi Sir.

One of the remarkable things is the modern Arabic name for the palace of the Tobiads, Qasr el 'Abd, Castle of the Slave, the name given perhaps in scorn by Nehemiah, even though it was a title of honour which the Persian Great King had bestowed.

Paul W. Lapp of the American School carried out excavations here April 10 - May 15, 1961. The aim was to determine the stratigraphical history of the place and make an effort to date the construction and subsequent history of the monumental building of Qasr el 'Abd. In the village two trenches were cut. It appears that the ancient village arose around 200 A.D. and that the site was abandoned soon after until modern times. The site was occupied in the 11th cent. B.C., and then there is a gap until the Hellenistic period, in the 2nd cent. B.C.

Two questions arise. Joshua's descriptions of the territory of Gad (Jos 13, 24-28) might lead us to think that it is the site of Ramath-Mispeh, lying between Heshban and Betonim. Abel equates Ramath-Hispeh with Ramoth-Gilead which he identifies with Husn Ajlun, 16 kms SW of Ramtha (*Géogr. II*, p. 430). De Vaux equates the site with the Mizpah of Jacob (Gn 31, 49), and Mispah of Gilead (Jg 10,17; 11, 29-34), and identifies them with Kh. Jel'ad (*RB* 1941, 31-33). Glueck also suggests Kh. Jel'ad (*Explor. V*, p. 101). If Betonim is Kh.

Batreh, as is generally held, these identifications are difficult. Geographically, better would be, es Sār, favoured by Noth, but for which there is no ceramic evidence. If the village belongs to the 2nd cent. B.C., it will be difficult to identify the *Baris of Josephus* with the *Birtha* of the Zenon Papyri.

El Qasr

Five hundred metres SSW of Iraq lies the Qasr. 6 squares were excavated in an attempt to date the construction, which seems to have been destroyed in the earthquake of 365 A.D. Its earliest Hellenistic occupation seems to be the early 2nd cent. B.C. An examination of the Square Building between the Qasr and the village suggests the same date for El Qasr. Therefore the 3rd cent., as suggested by Vincent and Mazar, seems excluded and evidence goes in favour of Josephus and Albright. If that is so where is Birtha of the Zenon Papyri? Some would place it in the vicinity. And what is El Qasr? The Tobiad Mausoleum as Albright suggests, or a palace or a temple or Seeheiligtum (Plöger in *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 71; 1955, 70-81).

Excavations were continued in Sept. 1961 and in 1962 and the matter was clarified a little. Lapp is convinced that it was built in the 2nd cent. B.C. (187-175) and that it had a religious purpose. He seems to have been led to this conclusion by the study of R. Amy, *Temples à escaliers*, *Syria* 27, 1950. Cfr. *BASOR* 165, 1962, 16-34; 171, 1963, 8-39; *ADAJ*, 6-7, (1962) 80-89; *LA XIV* 1963-64; *IEJ*, VII (1957) p. 137-45, 229-38.

Archaeologists are working at the site under the direction of Dr. J. M. DENZER. The site seems to be a real estate with orchards, a huge water reservoir and canals.

You return by El Bassa and Wadi es Sir, to return to Amman, passing on the left *Qoubour el Omarah* (Tombs of the Amirs).

PART II (SOUTH)

**Amman to Madaba: 33 kms
and to Mount Nebo: 42 kms**

Leaving Amman by the southwest part of the city, the road climbs up in a series of bends to the plateau.

Km 3. On the right the ruins of an Iron Age village, *Umm es Suwaiwyn*.

Km 4. On the left a track leads to *El Quweisima* with remains of a Byzantine church of the 7th cent., with Greek and Syrian inscriptions (see *Town of Nebo* p. 251-8; L. A. X 1959-60 — 177-80). South of the village is a Roman tomb of the 2nd or 3rd cent. A.D.

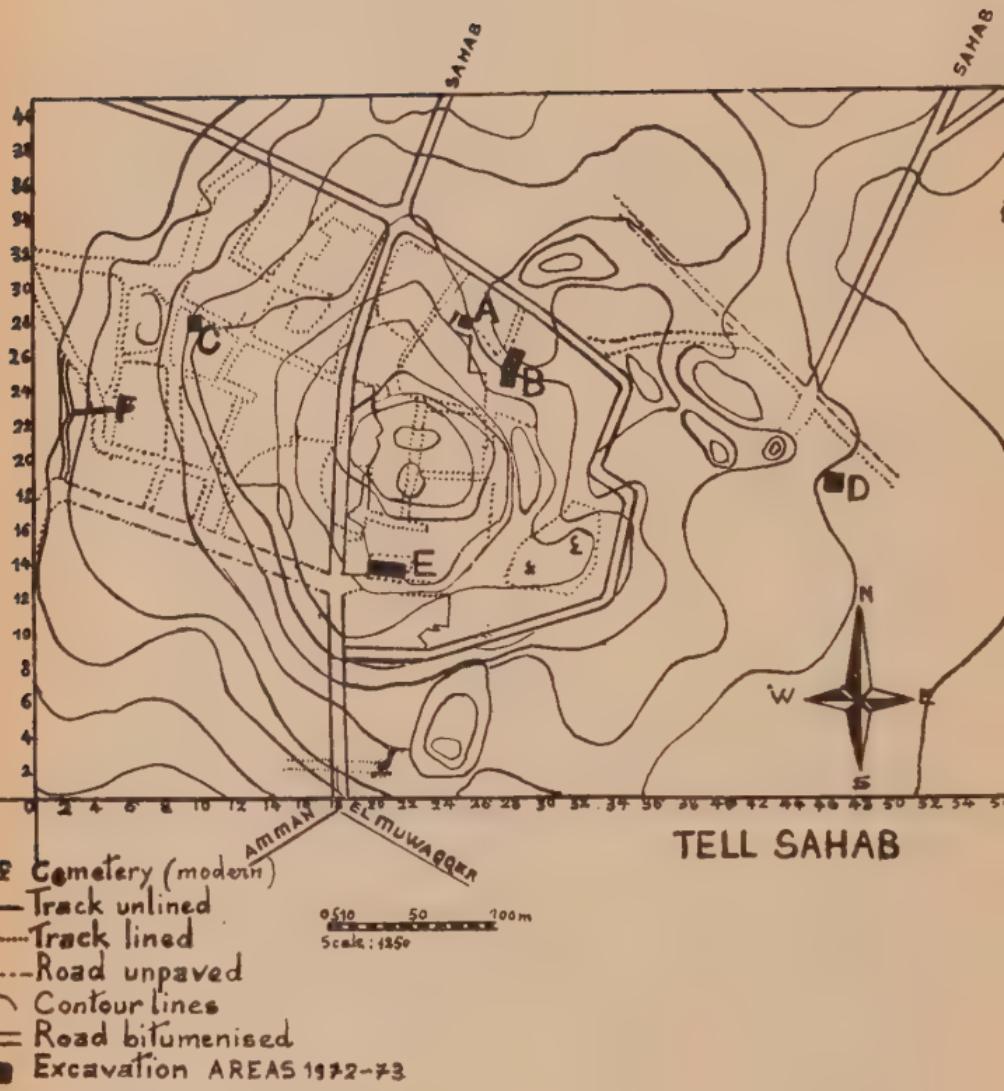
Km 5. Level crossing.

Just before crossing the line for the second time a road branches off on the left to *Sahab* and *Qasr al Kharanah*. Relating to *Sahab* after the discovery of three tombs dated back to the 13-8 B. C. the Department of Antiquities has began in 1972 systematic excavations (see p. 102). Moawiyah Ibrahim uncovered a settlement under the Iron II dated to Iron traces of destruction in 1200-1100 and Late Bronze, Medium Bronze, Caldialitic-Early Bronze occupation of the site.

Km 6. Station. To the right *Rujm Wasiyeh*, and Ammonite fort.

Km 10. *El Qasr*, with a Roman mausoleum. On the right the ruins of an extensive Roman village, now called *Khirbat al Suq*.

Excavations under the direction of Dr. Zayadine, have cleared the outlines of a monument on the top of the hill: it is a big church perhaps with martyrium and atrium. About



Sahab is one of the last major settlements on the road to Saudi Arabia and is probably the largest pre-Roman site on the borders of the Desert of East Jordan.

Numerous archaeological sites are found in the vicinity of Sahab. Notable is a series of fortified towers on the top of the surrounding hills protecting Sahab from all directions.

$3\frac{1}{2}$ kms east of El Qasr is *El Kahf* or *Rakim* with rich Byzantine tombs. To one of the grottoes is attached the legend of the Seven Sleepers (*Ashab el-Kahf* or *el-Rahim* mentioned in the Koran, *Sourat el Kahf*, XVIII, 9-26), the youngmen who escaped to a cave on a mountain in which they were sealed up to be faithful to One God.

Km 13. *El Yaduda*: a large natural mound with a fortress-like construction called Khirbet Abu Jaber. There are the ruins of a Church with mosaic and inscription. Cfr. *Town of Nebo* p. 227.

Km 18. Cross roads. Na'ur-Ma'an.

Km 20. *Umm el 'Amad*, with Bronze Age, Iron Age, Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine and Arab remains.

The road runs through a great plain of red soil, which produces good wheat.

Km 33. *Madaba*, the centre of the Qadha of Madaba, which has under it the Dhiban Nahiya. It is not a tidy town and beneath it lies the remains of all the earlier Madabas. Despite the fact that the Romans made of it a typical provincial town, nothing but a cistern and the mosaics remain of the Roman town today.

The modern town was built over the remains of Roman and Byzantine buildings, and in many houses mosaics can be seen. One mosaic, however, has become famous: the map of Madaba.

Madaba

It is built on the site of the Moabite town of the same name. It is first mentioned in 'a song of victory, together with Dibon and Heshbon, and seems to be a place of importance (Nb 21,30).

When the Israelites captured the region from Sihon, King of Heshbon, Moses gave it to the tribe of Reuben (Jos 13, 9-16). In the

war of Ammon against Israel at the time of David, the Syrian army employed by the Ammonites was encamped over against Madaba, but was defeated by Joab (1 Ch 19, 14-15). Mesha boasts that he took it from the Israelites, who had occupied it under Omri. At the time of Isaias it was subject to the Moabites, when the prophet foretold its desolation (Is. 15:1-9). The Maccabees Jonathan and Simon revenged the death of their brother John, killed by the children of Jambri of Madaba, by ambushing a great marriage procession (1 M 9, 35-42). Madaba was besieged for 6 months and captured (*Ant.* 13, 9, 1), and John Hyrcanus II offered Madaba with 11 other towns to Aretas IV to obtain aid against Aristobulus. Later it is looked upon as a Nabataean city and there is preserved in the Vatican Museum the inscription of the Tomb of the Governor under Aretas IV. During the Roman period it flourished and in the Byzantine period it was an Episcopal seat of the Province of Bosra. Christianity arrived there through the Philarch David, son of Hedulah. Its bishop Gaiānos was present at the Council of Chalcedon. It was probably destroyed by the Persians in 614. It was occupied for a short time after the Arab conquest. Little by little it was abandoned. In 1880 the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and the French Consul persuaded Midhat Pasha to allow 2,000 Christians of the Azeizat of Karak to occupy the ruins and the surrounding lands. Other Christians and Moslems joined them.

The Rosary Sisters arrived in 1896. There is a Melkite Church occasionally served from Ma'in. The Orthodox have a Girls' School, besides the famous church. There is a Methodist Mission.

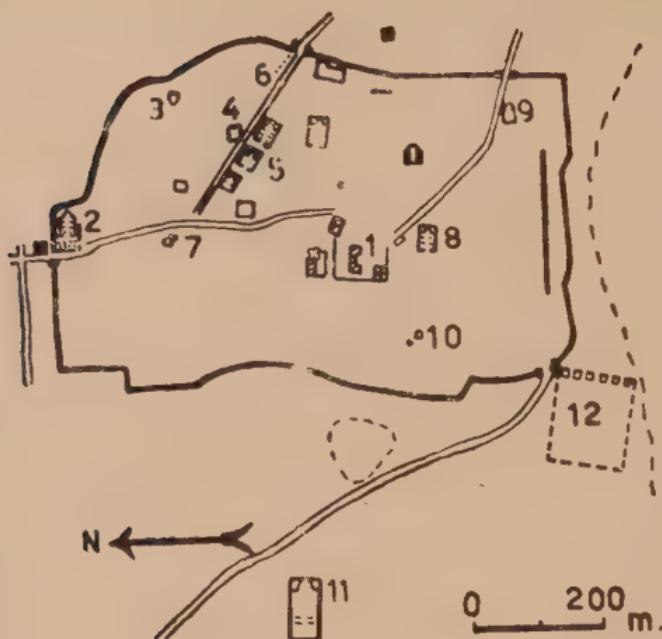
Map of Madaba

A monk from Madaba wrote in 1884 to the Greek Patriarch in Jerusalem telling him of the existence of the mosaic. The Patriarch Nicodemus (1883-1890) took no action, but his

successor Gerasimos sent an architect to Madaba to build a new church and include the mosaic in the pavement. At that time the mosaic was almost intact and measured about 25 m long by 5 m wide. The church was completed in 1896, but in the construction large sections of the mosaic were destroyed, as the architect believed the map of no consequence. In Dec. 1896 Kleopas Koikylides made a copy of it¹ and in 1897 Fathers Lagrange and Vincent O.P. made a detailed study of the map which was published in *Revue Biblique* 6 (1897, 165-184). In 1902 Palmer and Guthe made a colour copy. A very fine study was published by the late Fr. Roger O'Callaghan S.J. in *Dictionnaire de la Bible suppl'*. A very extensive study was published by Avi-Yonah in *The Madaba Map (Israel Exploration Soc. 1954)*. The latest is a fine article by V. R. Gold in the *Biblical Archaeologist* No. 3, 1958. Except for the *Tabula Peutingeriana*², the Mosaic Map of Madaba is the only ancient map of Palestine in existence. It depicts Biblical Palestine and part of the neighbouring countries. The centre of the map is Jerusalem: it extended on the west to the Mediterranean; on the east to Amman, Kerak, Petra; on the north probably to Byblos, certainly as far as Sidon; on the south to Memphis and Alexandria. From the items shown on the map it can be concluded that it dates from 560-565. The artist used 4 shades of red, 5-6 of blue green, as well as brown, violet, black, white, yellow, grey etc. No glass was used. It is estimated that 2,300,000 cubes were used, and that it would have taken 11,500

¹ Kleopas, later bishop of Nazareth, gave the material to the Franciscans and Fr. Jerome Golubovich (1865-1941) prepared it for the press (cfr *TS* Dec. 1965, 338).

² This road map of the world is of the 3rd cent., but the copy now extant dates from 1265. It was willed to Konrad Peutinger of Augsburg in 1508 and is now in the State Library of Vienna.



Madaba.

1. Ancient Acropolis, occupied by Latin Church.
2. Orthodox Church with mosaic map.
3. Mosaic.
4. Church of the Virgin, beside the ancient Forum.
5. Church of St Elias, 4th cent., restored in 7th cent.
6. Columns of the Cardo Maximus.
7. Mosaics.
8. Cathedral.
9. Church of the Apostles.
10. Mosaics.
11. Ancient Church.
12. Reservoir.

hours to lay the mosaic. From part of an inscription still remaining, apparently the people of the town bore the expense, "... of the Christ loving people of this town of Madaba". It is a fine example of Byzantine craftsmanship, although from some slips in the Greek, it would appear that the artist was a native and not a Greek.

Vegetable and animal life is also depicted: it would seem the lion still inhabited Moab. In 1963-64 the map was repaired by Prof. Donner at the expense of the German Federal Government.

Consult the accompanying plan for the other remains in the town. A Museum lately established has some more mosaics *in situ* and collected from the town and neighbourhoods the pottery of Iron I tomb found in 1967 at el-Mukhayyem, Madaba suburb. Work carried out to dig and restore the mosaics of the fourteen churches of the town. So far, the so-called cathedral is excavated, and the church of the Apostles where a collection of mosaics of this town are to be admired. St Elias church was a part of the main Roman road. Near the *Rest House* are the remains of a church found 4 kms north of Madaba. A mosaic found in 1960 in the Latin Quarter, while opening a new road, has classical Greek figures and a Greek inscription, a subject rare in this part of the world.

The Rest House is open to the public: it also serves to house some local antiquities (see *LA XIV*).

Mount Nebo

Following the road in a westerly direction from Madaba, you come after 10 kms to a hilly region at the edge of the plateau. The whole area is called Mount Nebo, and is cut off by Wadi 'Uyun Musa to the north and Wadi el 'Afrīt to the south. The mountain ridge presents three distinct heights: the central one (which you meet first) on which are dolmens, is called *Gebel Neba* (Mount Nebo), a hill to the left is called *Khirbet el Mekhayyat*, and a higher point farther west is called *Siyagha*, and contains the ruins of the Memorial of Moses' view of the Promised Land. This last the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land acquired in 1932: it was excavated and the result published in "*The Memorial of Moses on*



Plan of Siyagha.

1. The earliest building, trefoil in shape.
2. Church erected in VI cent.
3. Nartex.
4. North hall.
5. Baptistry.
6. Lady Chapel.
7. Atrium with cistern.
8. Courtyard of monastic building to the south.
9. Cistern with ovens.
10. Monastic buildings to the west.
11. Enclosure.
12. Courtyard of monastic buildings on the northern side.
13. Hermit cells.

Mount Nebo", 2 Vols., by Fr. S. Saller, o.f.m.

Opposite Jebel Neba are the ruins of *El Heisah* on the north side of the road. Although not excavated, 3 rooms with mosaics and a cistern are visible.

In 1963 the ruins of Mt Nebo were made more accessible and also more amenities were provided (*LA* 14, p. 285).

The restoration works of the mosaics led Father Corbo to new discoveries under the southern chapels, where mosaics with inscriptions were found.

In Summer 1976, during the restoration works carried on under the direction of Fr. Michele Piccirillo, the old baptistry of the sanctuary was found in the North Hall (n. 43 of the plan). Its mosaic floor, preserved in excellent condition under the removed mosaic dated to the end of the VIth cent. A.D., depicts scenes of hunting and stock-raising. It is the oldest dated mosaic with such pattern discovered in Jordan so far. The Greek dedicatory inscription on the front of the basin says: "By divine grace, at the time of our father and pastor Elias, beloved by God, the holy diaconicon (sacristy and baptistry) of God was rebuilt and adorned, with the basin of regeneration it contains, and with the splendid ciborium, by the good offices of Elias abbot and priest under the consulate of the Flavii Lampadious and Orestes, in the month of August, in the ninth indiction of the year 425 of the province (Arabia 531 A.D.). For the salvation of Mousileios advocate and Sergia his wife and for the salvation of Philadelphus advocate and Goti advocate and of all their kinfolk. Amen Lord".

In the second inscription at the entrance of the baptistry we can read the names of the artists who decorated it. It says: "Lord Jesus Christ remember the clerics and monks and all the others who rest here in peace. Lord remember SOELOS and KAIOMOS and ELIAS the mosaicists and their whole families".

Siyagha

The first building on the site was a small trefoil church constructed with large embossed stones. When the famous pilgrim Egeria visited the place about 390, it was occupied by monks from Egypt, and undoubtedly this was their church.

Probably in the 5th century, a large church of 3 naves was built, and later were added a Lady Chapel and a baptistry, all with very beautiful mosaic floors which still exist in part, and which the guard will uncover on request. The place was probably occupied until the 8th century, but from then until the 18th century there is little mention of it.

Some small cells on the north side would suggest hermits on the site, but certainly later when a great monastery was built around the church, the life of the monks was cenobitic. The monastic buildings have many things of interest, ovens, granaries, tombs, etc.

The monuments at Siyagha serve to fix the traditional location of Mount Nebo; they mark the spot where Moses was buried and represent a flourishing centre in the Byzantine period and a goal of Christian pilgrims for several centuries.

In early Byzantine times the place was called Nebo or Naba, Abarim, Phasga or Fasga or Pisgah and the holy mountain of Moses. Three of these names are found in the Bible. The name Siyagha originated with the local people, who referred to the place as the monastery, *siyagha* in Aramaic.

The Bible associates the following events with Mount Nebo or the vicinity: the passage and camp of the Israelites (Nb 21, 20; 33, 47), the story of Balak an Balaam (Nb 23, 11-14), the vision and death of Moses (Dt 34, 1,4), the dispute over the body of Moses between

Michael and Satan (Jude 9)¹ and the hiding of the tabernacle, the ark and the altar of incense in a cave by the prophet Jeremias (2 M 2, 4-5).

Yet Mount Nebo is primarily connected with Moses only. According to Dt 34,6, the place where Moses was buried remained unknown, but tradition says, that the place was later revealed to a shepherd, and the cave in which Moses lies is in the heart of the mountain below the church.

When you stand on this height and look out west, over the same mighty expanse of sea, plain and mountain, you can feel that you are actually on the stage on which was enacted the final scene in the earthly career of the greatest prophet of the Old Testament.

Before reaching Siyagha a track leads down to 'Ayun Musa, a bountiful spring, from which Madaba gets its water. Here also stood a monastery in the Byzantine period.

The ruins at Ayun Musa known as *Khirbet Ayun Musa* have recently been identified with *Beth Peor* (Phogar by O. Henke, *ZDPV* 1959, 155-163); since, according to Dt 34,6, Moses was buried "opposite Beth-Peor", this identification lends fresh support to the tradition which locates the burial of Moses in that area. (Cfr. *LA*, XIV, p. 193).

In front to the left of Siyagha is a round hill called *Agri Specula* by *Egeria*; according to her this is the mountain where Balak the son of Beor placed Balaam the soothsayer to curse the children of Israel, and God would not permit it.

¹ This incident is not mentioned in Scripture, but may have been a Jewish oral tradition. According to Clement of Alexandria, *Adumbrat. in Ep. Jud.* and Origen, *De Princ.* 3,2,1, St. Jude is quoting an apocryphal work, *The Assumption of Moses*. In the fragment of the work that has reached us this story is not found.

Khirbet el Mekhayyat

The second height, the present Khirbet el-Mekhayyat (*The Little Needle*), is reached by turning off to the southeast on a track just before Gebal Neba. The height stands out all by itself. This site was also acquired by the Franciscans in 1932, and it was partly excavated. The results were published in "*The Town of Nebo (Khirbet El-Mekhayyat)*" by Fr. S. Saller and Fr. B. Bagatti. *LA X* (1959-1960) Milik, *Notes d'épigraphie et de topographie jordaniennes*.

Archaeologists are now convinced that this is the site of the ancient town of Nebo, mentioned in the Bible: N 32, 3-38; 33, 47; 1 Ch 5, 8; Is 15, 2; Jr 48, 1-22; in the stele of Mesha; in *Antiquities of the Jews* (Josephus).

Nebo was given to the tribe of Reuben, who rebuilt it and renamed it: it, therefore, existed before them. In time the site was abandoned, but became again an important town in the Byzantine period, and most of the remains now to be seen are from that period.

On the highest part of the town, presumably the ancient citadel, are the remains of a church dedicated to St. George, with a mosaic floor. Lower down, within a new building is the well preserved mosaic floor of the church of SS. Lot and Procopius.

On the east side, amid poor modern houses, used by the local Bedouin tribe of 'Arab el-Ghaneimat, are two other churches, Amos and Closis, and of the priest John.

In 1962 Prof. Julio Ripamonti a Chilean of the Universidad Central de Venezuela carried out a detailed survey of the area to the north of Kh. el Mekhayyat and has recorded hundreds of monuments, caves, tombs, presses, cisterns etc. (See *L.A. XIII*, 1963, 326-327). He also excavated a monastic center (Ruzm el-Mukkhayet) and two rich Iron II tombs which provided the archaeologists with new topologies of the area.



Qaṣr el-Miṣnaqa — Meqawer

Roman Milestones in Wadi el-Mujib





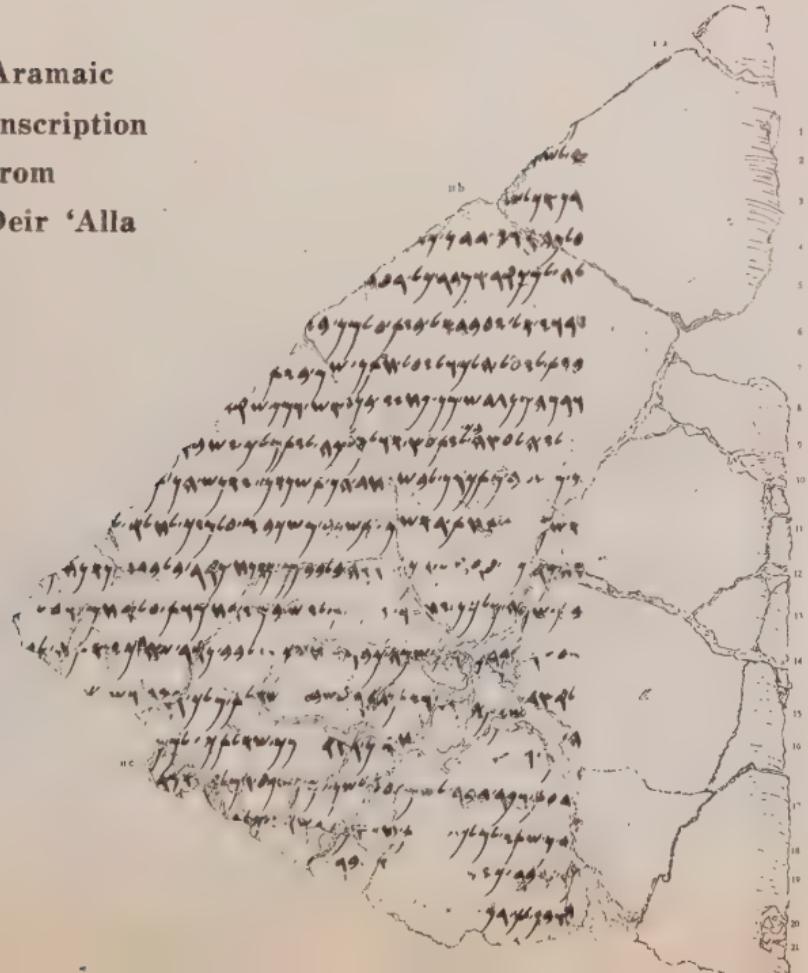
The Jordan and Yarmouk rivers





Tell es-Saidiyeh

Aramaic
Inscription
from
Deir 'Alla





A Menhir in Wadi Wala

A menhir and a dolmen

A Dolmen at el-Quttein



We are reminded of the poem of Mrs. C. F. Alexander.

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
 On this side Jordan's wave,
 In a vale in the land of Moab
 There lies a lonely grave,
 And no man knows that sepulcre,
 And no man saw it e'er;
 For the angels of God upturned the sod,
 And laid the dead man there.
 O lonely grave in Moab's land;
 O dark Beth-Peor's hill;
 Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
 And teach them to be still,
 God hath His mysteries of grace,
 Ways that we cannot tell,
 He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep
 Of him he loved so well.

Ma'in and Zarqa Ma'in

A road leads south from Madaba to the village of Ma'in (about 12 kms). It has a Greek Catholic Church built in 1933. The Latins built a church 1958-61, and it is served from Madaba. The Christian population came from Karak in 1886. Within the village are the remains of a Byzantine church, with a beautiful mosaic, well preserved within a modern house; the inscription bears the date 718-20 A.D. To the right in front of the church columns and capitals half buried in the ground or re-used in modern houses suggest the site of a church. All through the village are remains of Byzantine constructions.

Ma'in is the ancient *Baalmaon*, in Hebrew Baal Meon, Baal of the Waters, given to the tribe of Reuben (Nb 32, 38). It is mentioned on the Stele of Mesha as Beth-Baal-Meón, as also in Joshua (13, 17).

The temple was rebuilt by Mesha. According to Glueck there is sculptural evidence of a Nabataean temple.

Local tradition makes Ma'in the home of Balaam, but the Bible says that he was the "son of Beor, at Phathur on the Euphrates, in the

land of the Amauities" (Nb 22, 5), who was called by Balak, the King of Moab, to curse Israel. The fact that later in Joshua (13, 22) it is mentioned that Balaam the soothsayer (forteller) had been slain by the Rubenites, to whom this territory, including Beth-Baal-Meon, was given, suggests that he at least remained in the country. Furthermore Balak went to meet him at Ir-Moab, which is identified with Khirbet el Medeiyineh, overlooking Wadi Themed, near the Arnon (cfr. Num. 22:36).

In Deut. (23, 5), it is also said that he came from Mesopotamia. And Num. 23,7 reads: "From Aram has Balac brought me here, Moab's King, from the Eastern Mountains". The clue to the problem seems to be in Num. 22, 4: "So Moab said to the elders of Midian". The Midianites were a nomadic people, as we learn that they had camels. Due to their migratory movements they are found in Moab and with the Moabites they went to Balaam who lived at Phathur which is commonly identified with *Pitru* of the Assyrian inscriptions, a city on the Euphrates, some 643 km from Moab. After a second embassy he came with them. On the way Balaam is rebuked by his ass: "But now the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she asked Balaam, "What have I done to you that you should beat me these three times? You have acted so wilfully against me, said Balaam to the ass that I but had a sword at hand, I would kill you here and now". Then Balaam is rebuked by an angel. So he must have gone south first to the Midianites, if Balac was to meet him at the boundary city of Ir-Moab. He went with Balac to Cariath-Husoth, then to Bamoth-Baal, to Mount Phasga and finally to Mount Phogor, but all the time instead of cursing Israel, he blessed them. But read the whole story in Nb 22.

The narrative has formed the subject of discussion. Theologians are concerned with the Messianic character of Balaam's predictions; preachers moralize on his character;

critics analyse the narrative into sources; interpreters aim at a clear exposition of facts.

In general he became a classic example of everything a man should not be.

Later he and his people (the Midianites) were slain, for Moses said: "Why, they are the very ones who on Balaam's advice prompted the unfaithfulness of the Israelites towards the Lord in the Phogor affair, which began the slaughter of the Lord's community" (Num. 31,16; Js. 13,22). Ever after, the conduct of Balaam was repeated as a warning (Ml. 1,7; 2 Peter 2, 15; Jude 1, 11; Rev. "But I have against thee a few things: because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat and to commit fornication" (Rev. 2, 14). But not only was Jewish tradition unfavourable, St. Augustine calls him "a very bad man", and St. Thomas "a prophet of the devil". St. Jerome was less hard on him. Presumably Balaam was a magician who sought revelation from his own god, but the response was given by Yahweh. According to the universally admitted theological principle the gift of prophecy is bestowed in view of the good of others, irrespective of the merits of the prophet.

Zarqa Ma'in

From Ma'in the track continues for 25 kms to the *Hammam ez Zerqa* (The Blue Baths), where every spring thousands of people gather to bathe in the hot waters. From the Baths to the Dead Sea is about 4 kms.

The drive from Ma'in to the Springs is perhaps the most pleasant in the whole country, giving a delightful view of the Dead Sea and the mountains beyond, as well as of a good stretch of the River Jordan. The sight of hot water cascading down the mountain sides is quite unique.

Zarqa Ma'in: This is the largest hot spring in the country. It issues from basaltic

rock about 4 kms up the Zarqa Ma'in Wadi. Mixing with the waters of an adjoining cold spring it flows down a gorge in sandstone of wonderful beauty and passes into the Dead Sea. The temperature ranges from 55.5 to 60 degrees C, and in season is affected by the flow of the cold spring.

This spring is considered by many to be the *Baris* of Josephus and reading his account of the hot and cold springs in *Wars of the Jews, Bk. 7,6*, it seems probable.

'Ain ez Zara: Five kms south of Zarqa Ma'in are small thermal springs of the sulphurous saline type. There is also a cold spring. This spring is considered by some to be Callirhoe (Beautiful Waters), although many hold that it is Zarqa Ma'in. Anyhow, we know that Herod the Great came without success to obtain a cure from the baths of Callirhoe for the frightful malady that consumed him (Ant. 17,6). The very fact that Zara is easier to approach from the Dead Sea makes it more likely than the Callirhoe of Josephus, and that Herod was dying when brought there.

It is also probable that reference is made to these springs in Genesis (36,24) when speaking of the first Kings of Edom: "He is Ana who discovered the hot springs in the desert, when he was pasturing the asses of his father Sebeon".

The German Evangelical Institute for Archaeology of the Holy Land has carried out surface exploration, mainly east of the Jordan during 1961-2-3. See Report in *ADAJ* 6, 7, 8. They definitely place Callirhoe at Ain ez Zara, and Barras at Hammam Zarqa Ma'in (Mineral Springs).

We must now retrace our steps to Madaba.
From Madaba to Hisban and Na'ur (20 kms)

A road northward from Madaba, and passing the ruins of the ancient *Heshbon* (*Hisban*) and *Elealeh* (*El'Al*), reaches the village of Na'ur, where it meets the Amman-Jerusalem road.

Heshbon

Before *Heshbon* in the village of Hasoub a church with beautiful mosaics was discovered in 1970.

According to Num. 21,26 "Heshbon was the city of Sihon the King of the Amorites, who fought against the King of Moab: and took all the land, that had been of his dominions, as far as the Arnon". Moses conquered the Kingdom of Sihon and destroyed the cities, and Reuben received Heshon and Elealeh and rebuilt them (Nb 32,37). Later it went to Gad and then to the Levites as a city of refuge (Jos 21, 39). After the division of the Kingdom, Heshbon went to Israel, and when Sargon destroyed the Kingdom of Israel and carried the inhabitants into captivity, the people of Heshbon were carried away as captives and once again the Moabites occupied it. In 588 the Chaldeans conquered the whole region. Isiah (15,4; 16, 9) and Jeremias (48, 2) had uttered terrible prophecies against Heshbon and Elealeh, foretelling their utter destruction.

Taken by Alexander Janneaus, under Herod a fort was built there to protect the Perea (Jos. Ant. 13, 15, 4). Taken by Placidus, the general of Vespasian, Heshbon under the name of Esbus, became an important Roman city. Having embraced Christianity, it became the seat of a bishop suffragan to Bosra. One of its bishops, Zosos, assisted at the council of Chalcedon. During the Arab period it was for a time the most important town in the Balqa, but later it was completely abandoned, and in time completely ruined by the Bedouins.

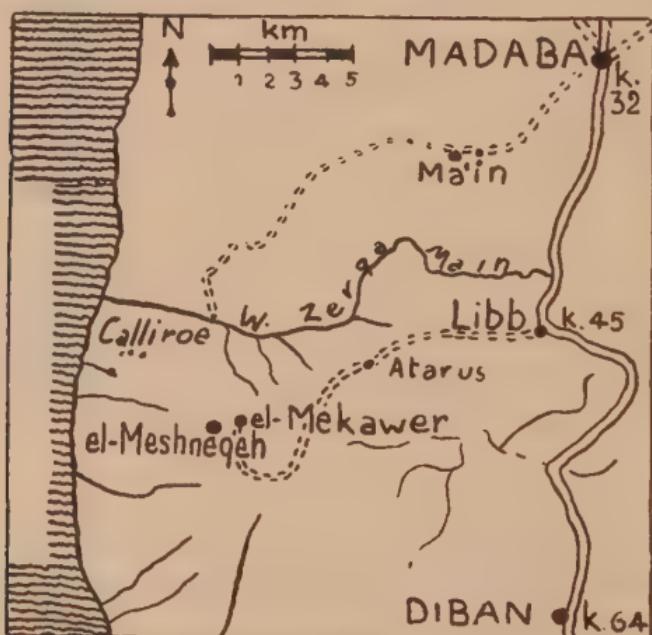
The ruins lie to the left north of the village on a long hill of some 800 metres. A plan of the ruins which has the apse of a church, can be found in Musil's *Arabia Petraea*, and the same in Meistermann's *Du Nil au Jourdain*. About 3 kms. northwest of Hisban, but only 200 metres from the ancient citadel is 'Ain Hisban, which seems to recall the passage in the Canticle of Canticles: "Thy eyes are like the fish-

pools in Heshbon, which are in the gate of the daughter of the multitude".

About 3 kms farther is *Khirbet El'Al* on the right. Beyond the village to the right is a rocky hill with the ruins of Elealeh (*God is high*) of the Bible. It has in great part the same history as Heshbon, and they are often mentioned together in the Bible. It was an important site in Byzantine and Roman periods, as its ruins still show.

From Madaba to Mekawir and Dhiban

From Madaba you follow the main highway to Karak as far as *Libb*, which probably corresponds to *Jahas*, where Sehon, King of the Amorites, was defeated, and later his capital at Hesebon captured (Nb 21,23; Dt 2, 32).



Km 45. At *Libb* you take a road to the right which after 22 kms reaches *El Mekawir*. On the way you pass *Ataruz*, the ancient *Ataroth*, which was given to the tribe of Gad because it "is grazing country". Fortified by Omri it was taken by Mesha. Once a large walled site, there is nothing left but a mass of shapeless ruins, marked by a butm (*Pistacia palaestina*) tree.

On a small plateau are the ruins of Machaerus, and nearby is a small village, *Mekawir*.

Josephus tells us that Machaerus was founded by Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.) on what may have been *Mokhrath* mentioned on the Mesha Stele. Destroyed by Gabinius (67 B.C.), it was rebuilt by Herod the Great, on the high mountain top nearby a citadel (*Wars of the Jews* 7, 6, 2). On the death of Herod it became the property of Herod Antipas. According to Pliny it was, after Jerusalem, the strongest fortress in Judea.

It was here that Herod Antipas kept in prison John the Baptist. Herod married a daughter of the Nabataean King, Aretas IV. He divorced her for his brother's wife, Herodias, which insult led to war. "At that time Herod the Tetrarch heard the fame of Jesus. And he said to his servants: This is John the Baptist. He is risen from the dead: and therefore mighty works shew forth themselves in him. For Herod had apprehended John and bound him and put him into prison, because of Herodias, his brother's wife. For John said to him: it is not lawful for thee to have her. And having a mind to put him to death, he feared the people: because they esteemed him as a prophet. But on Herod's birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod, whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask of him. But she being instructed before by her mother, said: Give me here in a dish the head of John the Baptist. And the King was struck sad: yet because of his oath and for them that sat with him at table, he commanded it to be given. And he sent and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought in a dish: and it was given to the dancer: and she brought it to her mother. And his disciples came and took the body and buried it and came and told Jesus" (M 14, 1-12).

The Romans withdrew in 66 A.D., at the beginning of the Revolt, and once more occu-

pied it in 70 A.D. after the fall of Jerusalem. A great number of Jews took refuge there, but it was captured and destroyed by Bassus. A direct track leads to Machaerus from Hammam Zarqa Ma'in, and thence to Libb and Dhiban.

To-day there is little left to see on the site of the massive buildings which once crowned the hill and the plateau. Every house seems to have had its own cistern, and only a few have been repaired. The ruins are divided into two parts by a small valley, and at the north extreme of the ruins is the modern village. Just below the village is a place called *El Kiniseh* (the church), above a cave. In 1952 we saw the apse still there. The local inhabitants have now removed the stones. Another building to the east with an apse is supposed to be a church site. Lately in fact, the church with a Greek inscription on a mosaic pavement has been uncovered. To the southeast is a series of tombs. All around are fragments of glassware and pottery of the Byzantine period. Half an hour's walk from Mekawir across a valley and up, a ridge brings you on the land bridge that connects Mekawir with *el Meshneqeh*, or *Qasr El Meshneqeh* (the Citadel of the Gallows). It is a completely isolated hill with a fairly flat top, and reminds one immediately of the Herodium near Bethlehem. Here stood the fortress, whose thick walls can still be seen, and it would seem that the entire top of the hill had been turned into a huge catch-basin for the storage of rain-water, which was led down to Mekawir. It was in this fortress that St. John the Baptist was beheaded¹.

On September 1978 excavations were begun by the Franciscan Biblical Institut.

From the summit there is a magnificent view of the Dead Sea, and besides the Russian Tower on the Mount of Olives, you can also

¹ For the later history of the head of John see *Discoveries at St. John's 'Ein Karim* by S. Saller O.F.M. pp. 132-5.

see Herod's two other mountain-top abodes: the Herodium near Bethlehem and the *Alexandreon* north of Jericho.

South of Mekawir, on a height you see *Ed Deir*, a ruined site, which has the same occupational history as Mekawir. Before *Ed Deir* if you turn south, you find on the mountain the village of *Qureifat* where in the old mosque to the south are visible the apse of a church and other Christian remains.

For further information see *AASOR XVIII-XIX, Explorations in Eastern Pal.* III, p. 131-5; Bagatti in *La Terra Santa* Nov. 1953.

You retrace your steps to Libb.

Dibon (Dhiban)

Continuing on the Karak road this soon winds down into *Wadi Wala* (56 km), a tributary of the Mojib, and which lower down is named *Wadi el Heidan*. Just before its conjunction with the Mojib are the ruins of a monastery, *Dār er Riyashi*. Going through *Wadi el Wali* you will remark the good terracing work done by Point IV. It is a perennial spring, fringed with oleanders, with fair sized fish in some of the pools. On the northern bank of the stream, near where the road crosses the stream, is a small ruined village, called *Khirbet Iskander*, which was partly excavated in 1954-5 by Peter Parr of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. It belongs to the Early and Middle Bronze ages. (Cfr. *ADAJ* IV p. 128-133).

After crossing the bridge a *menhir* (= *long stone*) stands by the road, with others lying about. We are now following exactly the old Roman road, and as you climb out of the valley you can see Roman milestones beside the old road just below the present one.

Km 65. *Dhiban*. The site consists of two mounts, one to the south which is occupied by the modern village of Dhiban and one to the north covered with the remains of late Arabic buildings; this latter was the site excavated

by the American School of Oriental Research during 1950-7.

For the excavations see *BASOR* 125, 133, 138, 140, 146, 163; *BA* 161, ; *ADAJ* II, 1953.

The site attracted the attention of scholars when the "Moabite Stone", an inscribed stele set up by Mesha, King of Moab, about 835 B.C., was discovered there in 1868.

Dibon was captured from the Moabites by Sihon King of the Amorites (Nb 21, 26-30). Sihon was overthrown by the Israelites, and the place was occupied by the tribe of Gad (Nb 32, 34; Jos. 13,9). Later Eglon occupied it (Jg 3, 12), but David in turn defeated Moab (2 Samuel 8,2). With the division of the kingdom Moab became independent until re-taken by Omri of Israel after 887 B.C. and forced to pay tribute. This lasted for 40 years, until the death of Ahab when King Mesha revolted and freed the country (2 Kings 3, 4-6).

Following these victories Mesha built Krh. (probably meaning *prominent*) as his capital. This is understood to mean that he rebuilt Dibon, but it could only have been for a time as Qir-hareseth (Karak) throughout most of Moabite history was the capital. The city probably shared the later fortunes of Moab.

The site is so overcrowded with buildings and walls that it is impossible for the casual visitor to disentangle the various levels. The occupation of the site goes back to the Bronze Age, 3,000 B.C.: it was occupied in the Iron Age. There are Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine buildings, and Arab ones.

In the area excavated on the east side no less than 4 or 5 city walls have been encountered: these were built in Byzantine, Roman and Nabataean times. One part of the wall has massive stones and in its thickness are two shafts going down eleven metres: the purpose is not clear. A large area at the south east corner was cleared, revealing a Nabataean building, and on this was a Roman building which

from an inscription is dated to Septimius Severus (208-11). Cfr. *Nabataean-Roman Temple at Dhiban* by Wright, *BASOR* 163.

Partly over the Roman building a church was built the east end of which had fallen down the side of the Tell. A Moslem tomb blocks work to the north. The church may date from the 6th cent., and may have been rebuilt in the 7th or 8th.

Some tombs of the Iron Age were found cut in the rock to the east of the Tell, and Byzantine tombs were found on the east side of the Dib'an-Amman road in an Arab cemetery.

Lately grain found in Dib'an was examined and found to be of 850 B.C. as was also the pottery in an independent examination. The grain is probably *hittah* (*hittim*). Cfr. Gn 30, 14; Jg 15, 1; Rt 2, 14. *BASOR* 146.

The Mesha Stele or the Moabite Stone

The Moabite Stone was first noticed in 1868 by the Rev. Frederick Klein, head of the C.M.S. mission in Jerusalem. He reported his chance discovery to the Prussian consul, who tried to remove the stone by means of hired native agents, offering 100 napoleons. When the secret got abroad, the French Consulate offered £ 60 for it. A neighbouring tribe, incensed, lit a fire under the stone, poured water on it and smashed it in pieces. Luckily before this happened Charles Clermont-Ganneau, a young member of the French Consulate who had arrived in Jerusalem in 1867 at the age of 21, had succeeded in making a squeeze of the stone. The stone being basalt went into fragments, some of which were lost. Clermont-Ganneau recovered what he could and brought it to Jerusalem, and it is now in the Louvre, Paris. The missing parts can be restored from the squeeze. There is a cast in the British

Museum¹. For a long time it was the earliest example of Hebrew writing, and the only contemporary historical record so far found in the country. The following is a complete translation.

I am Mesha, son of Chemosh², King of Moab, the Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab for thirty years, and I reigned after my father. And I made the high place for Chemosh in Qerkhah, a high place of salvation because he had saved me from all my foes and let me see my pleasure on all of them that hated me. Omri king of Israel afflicted Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his land; and his son succeeded him and he also said "I will afflict Moab". In my days said he this, but I saw my pleasure on him and on his house, and Israel perished with an everlasting destruction. Omri took possession of the land of Madaba and dwelt therein his days and half his son's days, forty years; but Chemosh restored it in my days. And I built Meon and made the reservoir in it, and I built Keryathen. Now the men of Gad had dwelt in the land of Ataroth of old; and the King of Israel built for himself Ataroth. And I fought against the city and took it, and I slew all the people of the city and made it a grazing stock to Chemosh and to Moab. And I captured thence the shrine of Dudah and dragged it before Chemosh in Keriyoth, and I settled there the men of Sharem and of Mekhrath. And Chemosh

¹ Two other remarkable stelae, found in Moab, appear to belong to the latter part of the Early Bronze Age. In 1851 de Saulcy discovered at Rujm el 'Abd, the strange pseudo-Hittite Stele. It has an inscription.

In 1930; at Balu' (Baluah) 7 kms south of the Arnon Mr. Head of the Dept. of Ant. of T.J. discovered a remarkable Stele with Egyptian figures whose worn inscription cannot be read. The site was partly excavated by Crowfoot.

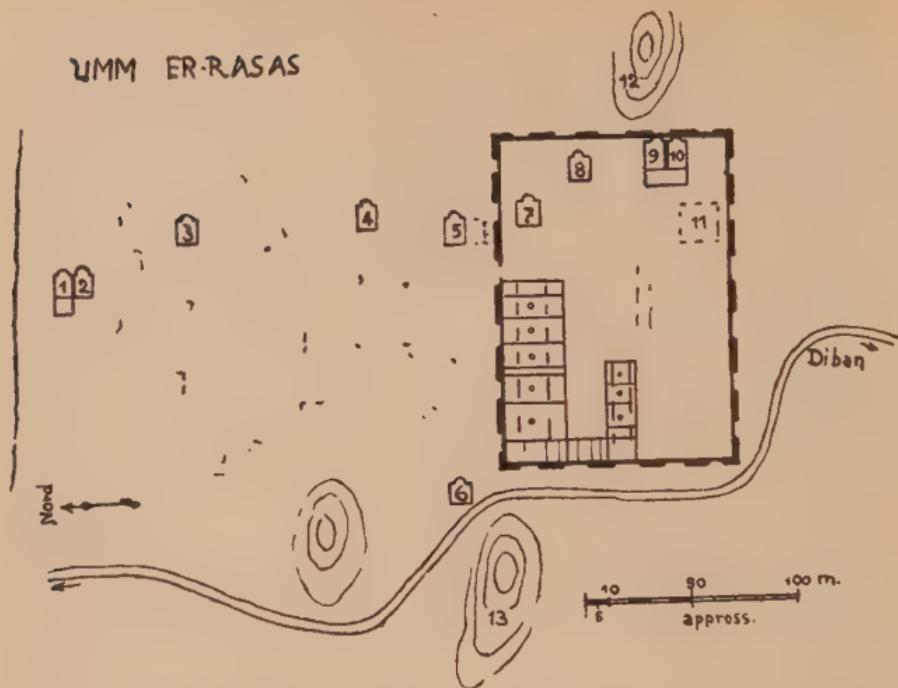
All three stelae point to a higher civilization than appears on the surface.

² Some think that Chemosh was a hermaphrodite deity partly male (beard and moustache) and partly female (Breasts etc). See Harding in *ADAJ* 1, 37.

said to me "Go, take Nebo against Israel". And I went by night and fought against it from dawn till noon, and I took it and slew the whole of it, 7,000 men and women, for I had devoted it to Ashtor Chemosh. And I took the vessels of Jehovah and dragged them before Chemosh. Now the king of Israel had built Yahas and lived in it while he fought against me but Chemosh drove him out before me. I took 200 men of Moab and all its chiefs, and brought them up against Yahas and took all unto Dibon. And I built Qerkhah, the wall of the forest and the wall of the mound, and its gates and its towers and king's palace, and I made two reservoirs in the midst of the city. Now there was no cistern in the city, so I said to all the people, "Make you every man a cistern in his house". And I cut the aqueduct for Qerkhah with the help of the prisoners of Israel. I rebuilt Aroer and made the highway through the Arnon, and I rebuilt Beth Ramoth for it was overthrown, and Betsor... for all Dibon was subject. And I reigned... 100 cities which I had added to the land. And I rebuilt Madaba and Beth Deblatein and the temple of Baal Meon, and took there the sheepmaster... the flocks of the land. Now Khernan the son of Dedan dwelt in it, and Dedan said... Chemosh said unto me "Go down against Khernan". So I went down and warred... and Chemosh dwelt in it all my days...

From Dhiban to Karak

The main highway continues across the plain to the verge of the precipitous ravine of *Wadi el Mujib*. Before reaching the descent a track crosses the main road. On the right it leads to *Mathlutha* with Nabataean, Roman Byzantine and Arab remains. To the left the track leads to Ara'ir, the Biblical town of Aroer. There is also a track directly from Dhiban itself. "On the edge of the Wadi Arnon" (Dt 2, 36), with remains of the Bronze, Iron and Nabataean Ages. In the summer of 1964 excavations were begun on the site by a Spanish Archaeological mission, directed by the Casa de Santiago of Jerusalem under the direction of Fr. Emilio Olavarri. There was a second campaign in Aug. 1965.



In fact it was not a town but a fort to defend the pass of the Arnon. The outer wall is 50 by 50 m, built of big uncut stones. On the side of the plain is a gate defended by a tower. Destroyed either by the Assyrians in 732 B.C. or by Nabuchadonosor, it remained unoccupied until Nabataean times when a small town was built there. The Romans destroyed it in 106 A.D., and since then it has served as a quarry for tombstones for the local bedouins.

From Ara'ir the track continues in an easterly direction to *Umm er Risas* (Mother of Lead), with Nabataean and Roman but especially Byzantine remains. The ruins consist of two groups: one inside the fortifications, the other to the north of the fortifications. The first is an undisturbed ruin; the second has been built over. As shown in the plan there are at least ten churches or chapels, six outside and four inside the fortifications, the big number probably occasioned by the number of tribes, for it always served as a defence post between the Desert and the Sown. Another feature is the double church, which although found elsewhere, as at Jerash, must have some liturgical function. To the north is another group of buildings near large pools. The main buildings

are two towers. It seems that they were built in Christian times and served as watchtowers. There is a strange legend in the *Desert of the Exodus* by Palmer p. 499. Cfr. *Town of Nebo* p. 245-251.

The track from Ara'ir to Umm er Risas leaves on the left *Musheirifa* which has also Nabatean, Roman, Byzantine and Arab remains, and to the right *Jumaiyil* with Iron Age, Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine remains. And after Umm er Risas the track continues to meet the Amman-Aqaba mainroad, leaving behind on the left *Museitiba*, with Nabataean remains.

Km 84. On the main road we reach the *Wadi Mujib*, the *Arnon* (the *Rapid*) of the Bible, which flows at the bottom of a gigantic crevasse opened by an earthquake. The gorge is 4 kms wide with a depth of 400 ms, the descent is 9 kms the ascent 11 kms. The Arnon was the boundary between the Moabites to the south and the Amorites to the north (Nb 21, 13-15; Dt 2, 24-36; Jg 11, 13; 2, 10, 2). The Lord ordered the Israelites to avoid all conflict with the Edomites, the descendants of Esau in Seir, the descendants of Lot in Moab, the Moabites, and in Ammon, the Ammonites (Dt 2). But north of the Arnon Moses conquered the country of Sihon, King of Heshbon, and that of Og, King of Bashan, and divided it between the tribes of Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh (Dt 3). Looking carefully as you descend, you can discern the Roman Road, which did not make so many bends as the present one does. You may also notice the small works at which gypsum is removed to be mixed with the cement at Fuheis. Nearing the fording point are the remains of a Roman bridge. Going up the other side you see some of the Roman milestones standing, and at a point where the present road and the Roman Road coincide a fort and a reservoir (*Mahattat el Haj* — Pilgrim Station) built by the Romans, but

which has also Nabataean remains. As its name implies, it was later used as a pilgrim station, before the desert route came into use.

El Karak District

The Muhafza of El Karak extends from the Wadi Mujib to the Wadi Fidan. It includes the Qadha of Tafila, and the Nahiyas of Mazar, Qasr, Zhor el Janubiya and Buseira.

Km. 106. About 15 kms after getting out of the gorge, you come on your left to *Qasr er Rabba*, the ruins of a Nabataean temple. A modern village has grown up around the ruins of the temple and many of its stones have been inserted in the modern houses and in the Police Station. Built as a tetrastyle, some of the drums and capitals of the four enormous Corinthian columns are still to be seen. It was built in the first quarter of the 2nd century A.D. This place is also known as *Beit el Karm* (House of the vineyard), and the vine and leaf design are frequent in the architectural decorations. By the time of the construction of this temple the Nabataeans had abandoned their one time antipathy to the products of the vine. For a fuller description of this site see *Explorations in Eastern Palestine* III, p. 107-113.

To the northeast lies *Baluah*, but from the road it is not visible. The site has remains from the Bronze, Iron, Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine and Arab periods¹.

From Qasr a track runs to *Tadun*, *Faqū'* and *Sirfa*, leaving on the left *Majdalein* with Roman, Byzantine and Arab remains. *Faqū'* has Byzantine remains. *Tadun*, $\frac{1}{2}$ km to the east,

¹ A new examination of the stele, with its 3 human figures and 4 lines of inscription has concluded that it is definitely Egyptian, possibly of the reign of Thutmose IV (1413-1405). See *A new transcription with Palaeographical and Historical Notes*, Ward and Martin, in *ADAJ* 8-9 (1964).



has the remains of a large church.

Five kms farther on we reach *Rabba* identified with the biblical *Ar Moab*, a town of the Moabites (Dt 2, 9-18; Is. 15, 1). It has Roman and Byzantine remains. There is an Orthodox Greek Parish.

Originally it was inhabited by the Emims, a race of giants (Dt 2, 10-11). Before the arrival of the Israelites it had been destroyed by the king of Heshbon (Nb 21, 26-28). Alexander Jannaeus conquered the greater part of Moab (*Antiquities of the Jews*. 13,14). His son Hyrcanus II offered 12 cities of Moab to Aretas IV for aid against his brother Aristobulus and amongst them is Arabatha or Rabatha, which certainly is Rabbath (*Antiquities of the Jesus*. 14,1). It was called Rabbath-Moab by the Greeks, and this name appears on Roman coins. The Romans took it to mean the town of *Arés* or *Mars*. Eusebius and St Jerome say that in their time it was called *Aréopolis*. and St Jerome says that it suffered from an earth tremor, about 344 A.D. In the following century it was the seat of a bishopric. In 449 its bishop, Anastasius, assisted at the second synod of Ephesus, and in 536 Elias at that of Jerusalem.

The site is now partly occupied, and difficult to examine. There is a plan of the site in Musil's *Arabia Petraea*, which is copied in Meisterman's *Guide du Nil au Jourdain* (1909). Excavations conducted by the Department have cleared the temple and a church. In the town Dr. Zayadine found two inscriptions, one of them recalling the restauration of the church in 507 under the bishop John due to an earthquake which ravaged the region.

From Rabba a track leads to *Humud*. There is an Orthodox Greek parish.

The track also goes to *Simakiya*. In the 17th cent. two Christian tribes, Akasheh and Hejazin, moved from near Petra and settled between Jehel Shihan and the village of Simakiya. They became Catholic in 1884. For ser-

vice in war they got from the Majali family the Byzantine ruins of Simakiya and they began to build there in 1909. The Latin Church was built in 1926-27. The Rosary Sisters came in 1913. The drought of 1962-3 led the Latin parish priest, with the help of CARE and NEF and other charitable associations to open a sewing class for women and a joinery for men. In 1934 the Akasheh became Melkite.

In the ruins of Khirbet el Medeiyineh, NE of the village, were found 5 stones. They have Thamudic (one also Greek) inscriptions. Thamud was an Arab tribe with its centre at *Mada'in Salih* and existed from 5 cent. B.C. to 7 cent. A.D. It is mentioned several times in the Koran. They are of interest as they fill in the gap between the Thamudic inscriptions of the South (usually not north of Ma'an) and the Safaitic (from the Safa region in the Hauran) inscriptions of the Hauran and the Syrian desert (see Winnett *Safaitic Inscriptions from Jordan*, Toronto 1957 and *A Study of the Lihyanite and Thamudic Inscriptions*, Toronto 1937).

Karak

Km 129 *Karak*: (alt. 949 m) stands on a rocky plateau, cut off on all sides by a valley, and surrounded by a crown of hills. It is the centre of a rich agricultural district. There is limited accommodation at the Italian Hospital.

Karak is the ancient Qir Moab of the Bible, also called Qir Heres and Hareseth by the prophets (Is 15, 1; 16, 7, 11; Jr 48, 36). Originally the Moabites occupied the whole country from the Zared to the Jabbok, but at the time of the Exodus the Amorites had pushed them down beyond the Arnon. Moses did not touch the land of the Moabites, as they were related to the Israelites. Relations between the Israelites and Moabites were at times amicable, at times hostile. Eglon, King of Moab, fought them and extended his conquest as far as Jericho, "the city of the palm trees" (Jg 3, 12-13).



Plan of Karak.

1. Italian Hospital.
2. Latin Church
3. Melkite Church
4. Government Buildings.
5. Castle.

For 18 years Eglon held them in servitude. Eglon, who was a very fat man, was slain by Ehud (Aod), who was ambidextrous (Jud. 3), who then held the Jordan and slew all the Moabites, 10,000, on the west side. Following this there was peace for 80 years. After that comes the story of the Book of Ruth when Elimeleck and Naomi went from Bethlehem, during a famine, to the land of Moab. And Ruth, the Moabite, came later to Bethlehem, and became the ancestor of David and of the Messiah. Later David brought his parents there: "And he said to the King of Moab: Let my father and my mother tarry with you, I beseech thee, till I know what God will do for me" (1 Samuel 22, 3). But when David became King he fought the Moabites (2 Samuel 8,2) and forced them to pay in tribute 100,000 lambs, and the wool of a 100,000 rams (2 Kings 3,4). Solomon took Moabite wives into his harem and he built, on what became known as the Mount of Scandal outside Jerusalem, a

temple to Chemosh, the pagan god of Moab (1 Kings 11, 7)¹.

After the division of Israel Mesha, the King of Moab, tried to restore its ancient frontiers. After the death of Ahad (852 or 854) he refused tribute, and was attacked by Jehoram of Israel and Jehoshaphat of Judah and the King of Edom. He took refuge in Qir Moab, and when hard pressed he took his eldest son and sacrificed him on the city wall to the God Chemosh² (2 Kings 3, 27).

At this sight, the siege was lifted. Later the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah were to foretell that Moab would be humbled for her pride (Is 16, 6-7; Jr 48, 35). The beginning of this destruction was at the time of Judith and about 646 its cities were destroyed and the population almost exterminated by Ashurbanipal, the King of Assyria. Little by little, the desert population, probably the Nabataeans, took their place, and they disappeared as a people in the 2nd century B.C.

During the Greek period *Qir Moab* became an important town under the name *Kharkha* (= town). Christianity penetrated the place very early and in the 5th century it had a bishop and the much venerated "Church of

¹ The matter of numbers in the Bible is a subject which has so far escaped any reliable explanation. Numbers in Hebrew and Greek were represented by the letters of the alphabet, and it may be that at different times these letters had different values. At times the numbers seem to be multiplied a hundredfold e.g. numbers of the Israelites at the Exodus: the numbers of animals paid in tribute. Perhaps many are purely rhetorical devices, as when we use "hundreds" and "thousands". Others may be explained by textual corruptions. It is such a big question that a book would be needed to explain the different explanations — sacred, symbolic, schematic etc.

² During excavations in 1961 there was found an inscription in Hebrew, giving the names of Mesha and Chemosh.

Nazareth". One of its bishops, Demetrius, attended the council of Jerusalem 536, and another, John, was celebrated for his sanctity and miracles (cfr. Meistermann, op. cit. p. 255) ¹.

It is not mentioned in the chronicles of the Arab conquest of Palestine. At the time of the Crusaders it was almost abandoned. About 1136 Payen, the cup-bearer of King Fulk, rebuilt the fortress, and it became the great centre of Oultre Jourdain. The seignory of Karak and Montreal (*Shaubak*) because of its position and extent the most important of the royal baronies. It extended from Zarqa Ma'in to 'Aqaba, and its jurisdiction extended to the seignory of St. Abraham (Hebron) and the Sinai peninsula. It dominated all the military and commercial routes between Syria and Egypt. It had a Latin archbishop with the title of *Petra Deserti*.

Raynald of Châillon who in 1177 married "La Dame de Crac", defended the town against Saladin in 1183 and against several other attacks in the following year². But Raynald had attacked the Moslem pilgrims, in breach

¹ Two monks of St. Sabas, well known in the dispute over the cult of images, are the Saints Theodore and Theophane of Moab, perhaps Karak (cfr. Milik *LA* X p. 173-174).

² During the siege took place the marriage of Isabella, daughter of Queen Maria Comnena, and half sister of king Guy, with Humphrey IV of Toron who was the stepson of Reynald of Chatillon. Isabella was 11 and Humphrey was 17. All was ready for their marriage when Saladin, on Nov. 20, 1183 attacked the castle. Despite the siege the wedding ceremonies were continued. Lady Stephanie, mother of the bridegroom, sent dishes from the bridal feast to Saladin. He in turn asked in which tower the young pair were housed and gave orders that it should not be bombarded by his siege engines, otherwise nine great mangonels were in continuous action. Saladin withdrew when help arrived from Jerusalem.

of a truce, and Saladin never forgave him. At the Battle of Hatin in 1187 Raynald was taken prisoner. He refused to purchase his life at the price of apostasy. Then Saladin with one stroke of his scimitar beheaded the lord of Karak. His wife held out at Karak for a year, and was only forced by famine to surrender. The Ayyubites extended the fortifications and later it became the apple of discord between the rulers of Egypt and Syria.

Karak fell, after Saladin's death, to his younger brother Al 'Adil.

On the death of Turan (1250) the last Ayyubid Sultan, the Mamluks chose Emir Aybak to rule Egypt, but he was opposed by the Ayyubites of Syria and Karak which remained for a long time a stronghold of opposition to Cairo. In time the Bahri Mamluks rose against Aybak, and having been defeated (1254), many of their Emirs fled to Karak, among them Baybars and Qalawun, of whom we shall hear more. On the death of Aybak, the Ayyubite prince of Karak, with the help of the Bahri Mamluks, attempted to seize Egypt, but being defeated by Qutuz, he disbanded the Bahrites, who returned to Egyptian allegiance. On the assassination of Qutuz, Baybars al Bunduqdari (1260-77), who had fled to Karak, was elected Sultan. A notorious example of his perfidy was the way he drew into his net Moghîth, the Ayyubite Prince of Karak. Swearing fealty to him, he invited Moghîth to his camp in Syria, where he had him arrested and sent to Cairo on the charge that he had sent his son to Hulagu beseeching him to spare Karak. Moghith was murdered in Cairo, but the Governor of Karak refused to surrender the citadel and Baybars took it by storm (1263), and demolished the venerated "Church of Nazareth" (*al Nâsirah*). Later in 1268, he rebuilt it, and the northwest corner is known as Baybars' tower. On the death of Baybars, (1277), his son Said became Sultan, but after two years was forced to abdicate by Qalawun (1279-90) and retire to

Karak, where he died. His mother hid his remains and took them to Damascus to be buried beside his father Baybars. Qalawun attended the funeral.

Nasir the younger son of Qalawun was elected Sultan in 1293¹, but after a year was deposed by Kitbugha and sent away to Karak. In 1299 he was recalled. During his reign, in 1305, severe restrictions were issued against Jews and Christians, but the edict was not published in Karak and Shaubek, as they were largely peopled by non-Moslems.

Nasir, treated more as a slave than a ruler, in 1309 set out as if on pilgrimage to Mecca, but on reaching Karak, he sent a despatch to Cairo, declaring his intention to remain there in peace, with the result that Baybars II became Sultan. The Governors of Syria stood by Nasir and Baybars demanded the restoration of the treasure, the Mamluks and the stud which Nasir had taken with him to Karak. Matters came to a head. Nasir marched from Karak into Syria and finally entered in triumph into Cairo, when Baybars was strangled. Nasir was jealous even of his own sons and the eldest, Ahmed, was banished to Karak. On Nasir's death (1340) his son Abu-Bakr was appointed as successor: he also had been in Karak, where he had shown himself cruel and overbearing.

After a few months he was deposed and succeeded by his brother Qujuq, who was deposed after 5 months himself. A deputation was sent to Karak to invite Ahmed to ascend the throne, which he finally did, but left the rule to the Emirs, while he lived a life of shameless self-indulgence. After a few months, he left Cairo, dressed as a Bedouin, and mounted on a camel with a couple of attendants he rode off to Karak, where he retired to solitude and was seen by none but his familiars.

¹ During the violent earthquake and storms of 1293 three towers fell at Karak,

Refusing to return, he was succeeded by his brother Ismail (1342-5), whose chief anxiety arose from the intrigues kept up by the deposed Ahmed. This led to the siege of Karak (1342). The strong fortress held out for a year; when at last it fell Ahmed was put to death, and his head despatched to Cairo.

During the reign of the Burji or Circassian dynasty, Karak still played a part. Sultan Barquq al Zahir (1382-1398) was dethroned by Yelbogha al Nasiry and sent as a prisoner to Karak. In the confusion that followed troops were sent to Karak to put Barquq to death. But favoured by the inhabitants, he escaped to Syria, and there found himself rallied around by increasing numbers. A battle followed near Gaza and Barquq's troops were put to flight. Fleeing back to Damascus by chance he came upon the royal tent where the young Sultan Hajji was lodged with the Caliph Mutawakkil. He took possession of it, treating the inmates kindly, and was rapidly joined by troops from all directions. With these he returned to Cairo, where he was again proclaimed Sultan (1390).

Little by little Karak was losing ground and the Bedouins began to control the area.

In 1502 under Qansawh al-Ghawri the Bedouins attacked Karak and advanced to attack Jerusalem when they were repulsed by the Syrian Emirs. With the taking of Cairo by the Ottoman ruler Selim in January 1517, Karak sank in importance.

In 1840 Ibrahim Pasha took it, having failed in 1832, and levelled some of the ramparts. In 1893 Hilmi Pasha marched against Karak, then in anarchy.

The families Beni Hemeida, of Central Arabian origin, and the Majali of Hebron, commanded the scene, but in 1894 the Turks took over the administration, and Karak became the head of a *sandjak* with a *mutassarrif*, under whom were the two Kaimakam of Salt and Ma'an. After World War I, it again became

an administrative centre under Kirkbride and at one stage even issued its own stamps. See *Arab Command* (the biography of Peake Pasha) by Major Jarvis (1948) for many interesting items about Karak.

The castle of Karak, extending over the southern part of the plateau, is a fine example of medieval military architecture. The main part of the building is Crusader work, to which annexes were added by the Mamluks and the Ottomans. The entrance leads into an outer valley which extends the whole of the western side, and contains underground galleries, which once served as barracks. The underground chapel, and the dungeon can be visited. From here, the upper part of the fortress is reached by a stairway partly cut in the rock.

To the west, a neck of land originally connected with the battlements, but a moat was cut to isolate it. From here unwanted prisoners were flung from the battlements to certain death.

There is a most interesting book about the Karak district, written by Dr. Reginetta Canova, wife of Dr. Canova (who served the Italian Hospital in Karak 1936-40) : "*Iscrizioni e Monumenti Proto-cristiani del Paese di Moab*, Vatican Press 1954. It contains 428 Greek inscriptions from 30 places in Moab. It was not the first attempt. Bliss in 1895 and Wilson in 1900 and several others had published inscriptions, which abound in this district.

The southern and western town walls are in a good state of preservation. At the north-western corner is Burj Ez Zahir Baybars (Baybars Tower, 1268), south of which is a tunnel 50 metres long, leading out of the town, ending in an arched gateway. The town was originally surrounded by a wall with 5 towers, and had only two entrances, both tunnels in the rock.

The view from the highest point of the castle is superb, extending all the way to the Mount of Olives.

Outside the citadel there is little to be seen in the town. The Church of *St George (El Khader)* (restored in 1849) is on the site of the Byzantine church of St. George. The Greek Orthodox church is on the site of the church of SS. Cyrus and John. The grand mosque (begun in 1897, and never finished) is on the site of the Crusader Basilica (see Milik *LA X* 1959-60). Also for Aramaic Thamudic inscription found in Karak, now in Flagellation Museum, Jerusalem, see Milik in *LA X* (1959-60). There is also in the Suq a small Orthodox Church of El Khader (St. George). On the NW spur of the town is a cave, inhabited until the end of last century by Greek hermits. It is known as *El Habis* (Hermitage).

The Latin Catholic Mission was founded in 1875, and belongs to the Latin Patriarchate. The Rosary Sisters arrived in 1905. The Italian Hospital, founded in 1935, is served by Nigrizia Sisters. The Melkites have a Church. The Lay Auxiliaries help in the parish. There is also an Adventist Mission.



Karak — Dead Sea

From Karak to Mazra: 35 kms

From Karak to Safi: 65 kms

From Karak a fairly good road leads down to the Dead Sea, at the point called *El Lisan* (*the tongue*), the northern point of which is known as Costigan Point and the southern one Molyneaux Point, so named by Lt. Com. Lynch, in honour of the two men who lost their lives while exploring the Dead Sea (cfr. *Expedition to the Dead Sea and the Jordan*, W.F. Lynch, 1849)¹. Before reaching the Lisan you pass *Dhira* (or *Bab edh-Dhra'*) an early Bronze Age site, and considered by Albright as "a place of pilgrimage, where annual feasts were celebrat-

¹ The level of the Dead Sea is changing. In 1806 the Dead Sea could easily be forded from the Lisan. In 1838 it could not. Near the northern end of the Sea there was an island in the 17th cent. In 1858 it was 12 feet high. In 1892 it disappeared.

The fate of Lt. Molyneaux of the H.M.S. Spartan, who was attacked in the autumn of 1847 while attempting to explore the Jordan and the Dead Sea, but who escaped, later to die at Beirut from the exertion, did not arouse the same excitement as the death of Costigan. This Irishman succeeded in getting a boat carried from the Mediterranean to Lake Tiberias, and descended the Jordan to the Dead Sea. Here he launched forth with a Maltese servant and succeeded in reaching the southern extremity. After 8 days they returned exhausted and without water to the northern shore. The servant crawled to Jericho for help. Mr. Nicolayson, a Protestant missionary in Jerusalem, got him to Jerusalem by horse, but he died 2 days later in the Franciscan Convent. Aged 33, he was buried on Sept, 7, 1835, on Mt. Sion.

ed". See *BASOR*, 6 (1962)¹.

The road turns north and brings you to Mazra Police Post (5 kms), before reaching which you cross many beautiful streams. Near where the road branches is *Kh. Tawahin es Sukkar* (Sugar Mills) which shows that sugar was once grown here. We return to the branch road and continue south through well-irrigated land to the town of *Safi*, and to the Police Post on the height beyond the town.

We are now in *Ghor es Safi*, which is in the *Ghor Nahiya*. Today it is common usage to call all this low-lying region *Ghor es Safi*, although only the southern part is *Ghor es Safi*.

In Gn 14,2 is mentioned the king of Bala, that is Segor. This in Byzantine times was called Zoora, as we see on the map of Madaba. There was a church of St. Lot at Segor, and it was the seat of a bishop. In the Wadi el Hasa that passes near Safi on the way to the Dead Sea, on the side of a cliff is a small her-

¹ Albright describes a great enclosure with many ancient hearths. Outside at a distance were many graves surrounded with stones and covered by shallow tumuli. At a little distance is a group of 7 fallen menhirs (cfr. *Arch. of Pal.* p. 78). The rains of 1964 uncovered a great many of these tombs and the market was flooded with finds from the place. The Franciscans and Dominicans acquired some of them. In Mar-Ap. 1965 the American School and the Deutsche Evangelische Institut investigated the place and their report (*The Jerusalem Times*, June 5, 1965) says that there are in the area 20,000 tombs. They hope to continue the work.

Albright had in his visit in 1924 assigned the site to the Ancient and Middle Bronze, i.e. 23-22 cent. B.C. Now Dr. Hennessy of the British School says that the new material should be dated 3350-2350 and can be divided into 4 groups. The excavation of the tell should decide the periods of habitations. From the presence of stone mortars it seems that it was more than a place of pilgrimage. See Report by F. S. Saller O.F.M. in *XV* (1965) p. 137-219.



Section of the Madaba Map showing the position of the shrine of St. Lot. From the palms it got the name Paumiers or Palmer.

mitage with a Greek inscription: "O Lord God of this holy place, come to the help of your servant". Nearer to the sea are the remains of a church. The medieval name of the place was Paumiers. The Arab name, Zoghar, was probably derived from the local product, sugar, and the name is recalled in Tawahin es Sukkar on the track between Safi and Safi Police Post. Today however, tomatoes are raised, and several Armenian families work at it.

There also is Kh. esh Sheikh Asa with Byzantine remains. For the other side of the demarcation line, see *Guide to the Holy Land*.

You must return the same way to Karak. Coming up from that side is the best view of the Castle, which, Crusader in origin,

Arab in repair, modern in decay, is still a thing of beauty.

Wadi 'Araba

From the southern end of the Dead Sea to 'Aqaba lies the Wadi 'Araba. Ancient history recounts the long fight that went on for the possession of this long valley, important on account of its minerals. To-day anyone who has plenty of time and stamina, can travel along the valley and examine the ancient sites.

About 36 kms south of the Dead Sea is *Khirbet Nahas* (Copper Ruin), which was in use during and after the time of Solomon. Near-by is *Khirbet Jariyeh* and *Khirbet Neqeib Aseimer*, used even in Arab times.

About $8\frac{1}{2}$ kms SSE of Kh. Nahas is *Feinān*, the *Phinon* of Nb 33, 42, on a large hill, near the *Wadi el Fidan*. Known as *Phiano*, in Byzantine times it was the seat of a bishopric. Frank who explored the Wadi Araba in two trips in 1932-34, speaks of four churches, a monastery and two cemeteries (see *ZDPV* 57-1934- 217-225; 58-1935-).

This was a great mining and smelting centre in the Bronze and Iron Ages, and in the Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine and Arabic periods. It is a tremendous site, a large part of which is on the north side of the Wadi Ghe-wir, as the lower part of the Wadi Dathneh is called before it joins the Wadi Dana to form Wadi El Fidan, which runs into the Wadi 'Araba. In the hills above Feinan is *Umm el Amad* (or *Umm el 'Awamid*: *Mother of Pillars*) which was long worked as a copper mine. The site is only $12\frac{1}{2}$ kms from Shaubak.

From Feinan to 'Aqaba on the old caravan route are also *Khirbet Bir Madhkur*, a large Khan of Nabataean and Roman origin, to guard the wells; and *Khirbet Taiyibeh*, also with Nabataean and Roman remains and built for the special purpose of guarding the direct track to Petra.

About 7 kms SSW of Petra is an extensive Nabataean mining and smelting centre, called *es Sabrah*, which has the well preserved remains of a small theatre.

Farther down the Wadi 'Araba is '*Ain Gharandal* with a Nabataean and Roman Khan: this is the Roman *Aridella* (or *Ariel-dela*) where the second Galatian cohort was stationed. About 30 kms farther on is '*Ain Ghadyan*, with many springs. On the other side of the Wadi is Meneiyeh, the largest and richest copper mining and smelting centre in the entire 'Araba.

The discovery of these datable mineral deposits in the Wadi 'Araba has explained much of the ancient history of Israel and Judah and Edom.

The mines were first worked by the Kenites and the Edomites, to whom they were related through the Kenizzites (cfr. Gn 15 and 36). The Kenites were smiths, and the related Kenizzites were also smiths, and probably taught the Israelites and Edomites about the ore deposits in the wadi 'Araba. Moses took a wife from the Kenites, and from them he very probably learned how to make a copper serpent (Nb 21, 9). According to the Bible (Gn 4, 22), Tubalcain (a Kenite) was the first forger of copper and iron instruments. It is stated in 1 Ch 4, 12-14 that the Kenizzites lived in the *Valley of Smiths*, which may well be the Wadi 'Araba where stood the *city of copper* (*Khirbet Nahas*). The Kenites, like the Rechabites (1 Ch 2, 55) and the Jerahmeelites were smiths and worked as individuals in Judah and in Israel, as itinerant smiths or "tinkers".

The Wadi 'Araba, therefore, with its minerals and its access to the trade of Arabia and the commerce of the Red Sea was the main cause of warfare between Israel and Edom. The wealth of the Edomites and the rapid rise of the Nabataean is in fact explained by control of these trade routes. And it also explains the prosperous period in Solomon's kingdom and later

in that of Judah. King David enslaved the Edomites (2 Samuel 8, 14; 1 Kings 11, 15) and probably worked the mines¹. Solomon certainly worked the mines, although hindered by Hadad, the Edomite, who got support from Egypt (1 Kings 11, 17), and so he developed trade between Egypt and the Hittite and Aramaean Empires, and also with Arabia (1 Kings 10, 29). Solomon's main export must have been copper, which he exchanged for gold (1 Kings 9,8). And when the Queen of Sheba came to visit him, it was very probably on a business mission: "King Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba all that it pleased her to ask" (1 Kings 10,13).

After Solomon's death trade ceased, until we hear of Jehoshaphat as ruling Edom through a deputy Governor (1 Kings 22, 48). An attempt to revive the trade ended in the wreck of the ships in the Gulf of 'Aqaba. Shortly after Edom rebelled and succeeded in gaining control once again of Wadi 'Araba.

A century later Amaziah (Amasias) captured Sela (Petra)², and so Uzziah recaptured Edom (2 Kings 14, 7-22) and rebuilt Elah, and the fortunes of Judah were marked by his control of the mines. Again in the reign of Ahaz (Achaz) (2 Kings 16, 6), under the protection of Rasin, King of Syria, the Edomites got back the mines and continued to hold them until the downfall of their kingdom in the 6th cent. B.C.

¹ David "put guards in Edom and placed there a garrison: and all Edom was made to serve David (2 Sam. 8, 14). Joab, David's general, in six months slew every male in Edom, but a boy named Haddad with some followers fled to Egypt, and later returned to fight Solomon (1 Kings 11, 14-22).

² He slew ten thousand men of Edom in the valley of the Saltpits and took the Rock by war, and he called the name thereof Jechtehel, unto this day (2 Kings 14,7).

Karak — Tafila

(75 kms)

From Karak the road runs due south, across a monotonous plateau. To the right of the road are villages of interest to the archaeologist. *Ifranj* has a hermitage, inscriptions; *Azra* with inscriptions; *Ainun* with architectural remains; *Mihna* with remains of Church and inscriptions; *Kufeiraz* with Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine and Arab remains. Farther inland is *Kathrabba* with Roman remains.

Km 141. You reach *Mauta* in a fertile plain, where the Arab and Byzantine armies first crossed swords (632). Zayd ibn Hárithah, the adopted son of Mohammed, was the leader. Under him were 3000 men. "Zayd lost his life in the raid and the newly converted Khálid ibn al Walid succeeded in leading the remnant of the shattered army back to al Madinah. The ostensible object of the raid was to avenge the martyrdom of the Prophet's emissary sent to the Ghassānidé prince of Busra; the real one was to secure the coveted Mashrafiyah swords manufactured at Mauta and neighbouring towns with a view to using them in the impending attack on Makkah" (Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 147.) East of the village is *Mashad* and beside it was the traditional site of the battle.

At *Mazar* we find a very large and unexpected mosque, built on the site of an old mosque, towards the building of which Peake Pasha contributed. In *Mazar* is buried Jafar ibn abu Talib who taking command at the battle of Mauta, after the death of Zayd, also fell in the battle: and also Abdallah ibn Rawāha, who commanded after Jafar. In front of the mosque is beautiful land, which is a Waqf of the mosque. (For the battle of Mauta cfr. *Life of Mohammed* by Muir p. 394).

At the end of the town keep to your left.

Dhat Ras

Continuing south we follow the old Roman road, which near *Rujm es Sakri*, runs straight on through *Duweikhila* (with Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine remains), while we run somewhat east, over a pleasant plateau, to find up on the left the ruins of *Dhat Ras*. At present it is believed that *Dhat Ras* is to be identified with *Kyriacoupolis*, an episcopal see in *Palestina Tertia*.

Dhat Ras is one of the largest Nabataean sites in the country. Situated on a height, 1150 metres high, it dominates the entire south end of the rich Moabite plateau. In all directions the land slopes away from the position of *Dhat Ras*, so that it is, as the name implies, the head of the body of the entire southern extent of the plateau. It contains the ruins of three temples to which the inhabitants of the intensively cultivated area could repair on religious occasions. The small temple at the southeast side is fairly well preserved, but the other temples have been almost completely destroyed to supply stones for the houses of the small modern village on the site. Traces of two churches have also been discovered.

Wadi el Hasa

Farther along, the road begins its descent into Wadi el Hasa which is the *Torrent of Zered* of Nb 21, 12; Dt 2: 13; and to the northern limit of the district of Jebal, the ancient *Gabalene* (one of the divisions of the Land of Edom). South of this torrent was Tophel (Tafila) - Dt 1, 1 - the chief town of the Jebal.

When you reach the edge of the Wadi el Hasa, you will see that the scenery changes completely: the plateau finishes, giving place to sleep valleys, with hills of jagged outline, the change-over from limestone to sandstone rock. In Springtime the black wild iris (*Iris petrana*) is very abundant around here.

To the northeast of the Wadi el Hasa, on the foothills are *Qasr Muham*, *Qasr Shuhār*,

Qasr Abu Inaya and *Qasr Nāsir*, all close together, and natural outposts against the nomads of the desert from the Iron Age to the Byzantine period. For Muhai or Mahaiy see *LA XIV* p. 214. Canova (*op. cit.*) gives 68 inscriptions from Mahaiy.

Khirbet et Tannur

Km 174. Skirting the pleasant *Aīna* (site of a Nabataean temple), you reach *Laban* Police Post, from which is the best approach to *Khirbet et Tannur*, a stiff climb, or failing that a splendid view of it. A high and lonely peak, it rises steeply at the confluence of the Wadi el Hasa and the Wadi el Aban.

On this stood the Nabataean temple of Atargatis and Hadad, which was excavated by the American School under Professor Glueck, in conjunction with the Transjordan Department of Antiquities.

The peak where the temple stood is accessible only on one side by a single steep path on its southeastern side. When some earthquake shattered the temple and it was abandoned, its inaccessibility preserved it, until some lone shepherd smashed an idol face. The temple went through several phases of rebuilding without any complete alteration. Broad steps led up to a gateway in the centre of the east wall of a large court. On the north and south sides were colonnaded porches. In front, at the west end of the court, four steps led to the central gateway of the temple proper. The shrine, standing in the centre of the higher platform, was oriented almost due east. A staircase led to its flat roof.

The most commonly known Nabataean deity is dhu-Shara (Dūshara, Dūsares, Dionysus). He was worshipped at Petra in the form of an unhewn, four cornered black stone. In Tannur a whole pantheon of deities was found: Atargatis (Artemis), the goddess of foliage and fruit; Zeus-Hadad, god of the thunderbolt; Tyche, a guardian goddess; Tyche-Nike, the

goddess of fortune and victory; and many others. That a variety of influences were at work is evident, from the Greek and Nabataean inscriptions. The whole represents a mixture of Hellenistic, Syrian, Egyptian and Parthian influences which was characteristic of the eclectic nature of the Nabataean civilization. The history of Khirbet et Tannur can be placed from 25 B.C. to 125 A.D.

Most of the carvings and sculpture is now in the Amman Museum. The American School's share of the antiquities found is now at the Cincinnati Art Museum. It must have been a prodigious task to haul these great blocks of stone up to the top of the hill. See *BASOR* 126; *BA* 1962 No. 2, *Nabataean Torques* by Glueck.

In the Wadi el Hasa, behind Kh. et Tannur are two hot water springs, Burbeita and Afra. At Kh. el Burbeita are Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine remains. A few kms farther on, on the main road to the left is *Qasr ed Darih*, the ruins of another temple in plan like that of Tannur.

Tafila (km 197)

The road makes a long climb along the Wadi el Laban, passing the town of Laban, and as it emerges on a small plain, the old Roman road, at *Kh. Abu Banna* (with Iron Age, Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine and Arab remains), sent off a branch to Tafila, while the main road went straight south to Abur, Gharandal. The milestones can be seen on both. At the end of this plain a side road goes off to *Abur, Tuwana* and on to *Jurf ed Darwish Station* on the railway line. On this plain Col. Lawrence fought the battle of Tafila, the only set battle of his campaign.

The road dips down into another valley and soon snakes down into Tafila, lying in a beautiful valley of extensive olive groves, fig plantations and abundant running water.

It is the centre of the Tafila Qadha with a

population of 4,506, of whom a minority are Christians. It probably corresponds to *Thopel* (Dt 1, 1). It is identified by some with *Augustopolis*, an episcopal see. It was one of the seven fortresses built by the Crusaders in *Oultre Jourdain*. The ruins are below and north of the high point of the town, on your right at the far end.

Climbing out of Tafila you travel through a well-watered country. Just before reaching *Ain el Beida*, a track leads off on the right to Sila' or Sela which is worth a visit. This Sela is not to be confused with the Biblical Sela, Umm el Biyar, within Petra itself. But it is a miniature Petra in itself. A place somewhat similar to Sela in its location and arrangements for the conservation of water is *Sheikh er Rish*, which lies 5 kms SSW of Dana. Later on another track leads off on the right to *Buseira*, or little Bosra (Bozra), one time capital of the Edomites (Gn 36, 33). Isaias, in representing Christ's victory over his enemies prophesies: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosra, this beautiful one in his robe, walking in the greatness of his strength?" (Is 63, 1). In foretelling the wrath of Yahweh in the coming judgment he says: "for there is a sacrifice to Yahweh in Bosra and a great slaughter in the land of Edom" (Is 34,6). Jeremiah foretells its destruction: "For I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bosra shall become a desolation and a reproach and a desert and a curse: and all her cities shall be everlasting wastes" (Jr 49, 13; also 48, 24, 24; 49). "I will send a fire into Theman¹: and it shall devour the houses of Bosra" (Amos 1, 12).

There is a good view of Bosra from the main road, as it stands on a small plateau

¹ Theman (or Theiman) is identified by Glueck with Tawilan, an Edomite Iron Age site between al Ji and the entrance to Petra. Others think that it should be identified with Tuwana.

above the ravine. It has remains of the Iron Age and of the Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine (church with four half-columns) periods.

Recent excavations under the direction of Crystal Bennett have provided evidence that Buseirah was the main town of the Kingdom of Edom in Biblical times. The Assyrian palace was found on the acropolis, and typical Edomite houses on the southern terraces with beautiful local pottery.

Nearer to the main road and northeast of Buseira is *Ain el 'Ubır* (Spring of the Passage), for by it a track led up to the plateau. In trying to trace the route of the Exodus as given in Nb 33, 42-46, the following may be the facts: Salmona (probably Bir Madkur) to the north of *Ain Gharandal*, Punun is Fienan, and Oboth is *Ain Ubır*, Jeabarim (the ruins in the Abarim mountains), Aina (where one of the spring is called *Ain el Jehudah*) or Mohai (Qasr Mohai) southeast of Dhat Ras (see *Bibbia e Oriente* art. by L. Vestri. Fasc. 1964, 86-94). According to the *Atlante Biblico* of Baldi-Lemaire, Oboth is El-Weibah in the Wadi 'Araba.

Farther on, away to the left is *Gharandal*, which according to many is the ancient *Arindela*, a Roman town, and the seat of a bishopric in the 5th cent. Nearby is *Kh. el Muhezzek* (which some would identify with Augustopolis) with a church with columns and capitals and an inscribed lintel, which may be of 786 A.D. (or 607), and if so would be the latest dated inscription in those parts.

Before reaching *Rashadiya* you come to a big ruin on the right, opposite to which is the tomb of Hodheifa, whom I take to be one of the Companions of Mohammed.

At *Rashadiya* Police Post you have to the west one of the most beautiful panoramas you can imagine. In the valley west of *Rashadiya* is the beautiful spring, *Ain Lahaha*, which has great medicinal value.

After Rashadiya, before Dana (24.5 kms from Tafila) a road goes off to *Qasr et Talah*, in the Wadi 'Araba. This is identified with *Toloana*.

Leaving the flat roofs of pretty *Dana*¹ to your right, as you descend from the height you cannot fail to notice away to your left a lone tree, *Shajarat et Tayyar* (Tree of the Flier). It is marked on the map, because it marks boundary between the districts of Karak and Ma'an².

¹ In the valley below Dana are the remains of what was once a forest of oak and juniper, and where wolves and striped hyenas are fairly common.

² It is a pistacia tree and many stories circulate as to the origin of the name. Most likely it is the burial site of a Sheikh from the Tayar section of the Wuld Ali, which is part of the Anaiza tribal confederation.

Ma'an District

Ma'an Muhafaza stretches from Wadi el Fidan on the north to the Gulf of Aqaba in the south taking in the whole breadth of the country from west to east. It includes two towns with municipalities, Ma'an and Aqaba, and has the Liwa of Aqaba and the Nahiyas of Shaubak and Wadi Musa.

Shaubak (km 257)

As we approach *Shaubak* we see a long stretch of the great Roman road beside the modern road. Before reaching Nijil a track leads off on the left to Ma'an (53 kms). Before you reach Nijil (Negla), too often taken for Shaubak itself, go off the road to the right and you will get a beautiful view of the Crusader Castle and the green valley below it. A good road leads off on the right to Shaubak itself, which is the most important place in the esh Sharâ district.

On the track from this main road to Ma'an is *Udhruh'*, where are the ruins of a Roman camp, *Adroa*, on the main Roman highway, and also the ruins of a church with 3 naves. According to Abel this is the episcopal see of Augustopolis (see *Geog.* II, pages 178, 201, 204).

Udhruh was the scene of the arbitration in 659 between the Caliph 'Ali and Mu'awiyah, when abu-Musa el Ash'ari represented the Caliph and 'Amr ibn el 'As represented Mu'awiyah.

You branch off to the right to go to Shaubak with a fortress on an isolated hill. In 1115 Baldwin had erected on this hill a strong fortress with triple wall to command the trade routes. It was called *Mons Regalis* (Montreal), because founded by the King. After the fall of Karak Montreal held out for a time.

Ludolf of Sudheim (1336-1341) gives a very good description of this remarkable fort. He

says that in Arabic it was Arab, in Chaldaean Shoback, and in Latin Mons Regalis. The town around the fort had then 6,000 Christians. Towards the end of the 14th century the Crusader castle was demolished and replaced by a smaller Arab one. In 1832 Ibrahim Pasha dismantled the place.

The circle of the walls and the gateway are complete, but within is only the modern village of some 100 souls. Of interest is the rock-cut well-shaft of 375 steps leading down to an underground water supply. Was finding water a secret of medieval clairvoyance?

Leaving by *Nijil*, which has Bronze Age, Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine remains, we pass through an area which is dotted with the stumps of trees: here and there a few lonely trees stand: all that remains of a forest, that was cut down by the Turks in W. War I, as fuel for their railway. And as you travel along a high mountain ridge, for we are amid the highest hills in Jordan, you can see the embankment of the light railway built to take the wood away. In Nijil there is a fine agricultural station where you can see acres of Aleppo Pine seedlings, which are being used for the reforestation of this area.

Just before starting the descent to Petra, you come upon the Tawilan ridge dig of Crystal Bennett's (1968-70), where she found an Edomite settlement from 8th century.

Km 292. After a long gradual descent you reach *Ain Musa*, with gardens, and where you meet the road from Ma'an to Elji. *Ain Musa* (the spring of Moses) is considered erroneously by the local inhabitants to be the traditional site where Moses smote the rock and water gushed forth (*Exodus 17, 1-7*). The road now begins to descend Wadi Musa to the village and Police Post of Elji. Until lately you had to walk or ride from here. But you need a ticket and a guide.

Petra

Petra really begins at Wadi Musa and the village of Elji, for under this lie the remains of an outlying suburb of the city. The spring supplies the water to the village, and in fact the village has taken on the name of Wadi Musa. Possibly a good deal of the business and trade was carried on here rather than within Petra itself.

The classical name Petra and the early name Sela both mean Rock, but you must really go there yourself to realize how right the name is. To the local population Wadi Musa covers everything.

On the right as you go down there is a hilltop *el Wu'eira*, with the ruins of a small Crusader castle with chapel. The castle was built by Baldwin II in 1127. It was besieged by the Egyptians in 1158, and lost with Petra in 1188-9. It was called *Li Vaux Moyse*.

As you go down the valley, you find the first Nabataean monuments, two tower-like tombs of about 8 m with the typical crow-step design at the top. A little farther on is the Obelisk Tomb, named from the 4 obelisks on the upper storey. The valley turns to the right, but a path goes straight on up to the rocks to a suburb called *El Madras*, which is the Nabataean name found in an inscription. There are many monuments as in Petra itself.

Entering the ravine, the winding path, which was once paved, follows the dry torrent bed, and above you to a height of 70-100 m rise sheer cliffs of soft sandstone of varied colours and fantastic shapes. It is eerie at any time but at night with the full moon it is a child's dream of fairyland.

Soon after you enter the cleft there are remains of a triumphal arch which was still standing in 1896. On either side can be seen the rock-cut channels for the water from Ain Musa. Here and there are small niches on the sides, mostly containing the representation of the god Dushara, a rectangular block of stone

or an obelisk. Here and there a valley leads off to some place now unknown. And despite the silence, the Sik can be a trap, as witnessed by the cloud-burst that caused 28 people to be drowned on April 8, 1963.

You are entering a new strange world. When you leave it, you will find it hard to descend to the common-place of every day. For when you have seen the pale moonlight on the mountain walls, the dark and purple and variegated heights you have had a passing glimpse the visions of this enchanted world of which the poets write:

"Under the arch of Life where love and death,
Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I saw
Beauty enthroned; and though her gaze struck
awe.

I drew it in as simply as my breath".

Suddenly there springs up before you the façade of a great tomb. This is *Khazneh Far'on* (*the Treasury of Pharaoh*) and the Urn at the top shows how the locals have tried to release the treasure with bullets. The Khazneh is believed to be a tomb, probably of some Nabataean King, hewn out of the rose red rock in the classical Greek (Corinthian) style. It is the best preserved monument in Petra. Some, however, believe that it was a Temple of Isis and the work of the Romans.

In 1960, under G.R.N. Wright's direction the portion of the rock-cut column, fallen from the façade of the Khazneh, was erected. (It had originally been only partly constructed.)

Following his work on the restoration of the Khazneh, G.R.H. Wright made a very careful study of the monument, published in *ADAJ* 6 (1962): *The Khazneh at Petra, a Review*. In this article you will find listed all the literature dealing with Petra, plus a detail discussion of the monument, which he believes was carved in the 2nd cent. A.D.

Beyond this opening the gorge narrows again with great tombs on either side, many

with the typical Nabataean "crowstep" design. Not every rock-cut cavern is a tomb: many are dwellings, some of 2 or 3 storeys, while some cliffs have regular tiers of streets. A little farther on, on the left is a Roman theatre, for about 3,000, cut out of the living rock in the 2nd or 3rd cent. A.D. In cutting the theatre many earlier tombs were sliced and now stand gaping.

You have penetrated to the heart of the mountain: the stoney hills fall back to leave an open space 1½ kms long and 1 km wide.

This valley, through which winds the main bed, is called Wadi Musa, and from this the entire area gets its name. The Wadi leads through the area of the ancient city site and then proceeds around the mountain called el-Habis, joining with Wadi Barra, and penetrating the western ridge through the gorge known as el Siyagh. Finally going down into Wadi Araba.

The ancient city site seems to have been concentrated along the banks of the Wadi Musa; here were its temples, squares, baths and private houses. This was the capital of the Nabataeans. There was an even earlier Edomite town.

Occupation of the Petraean area began at an early period. With the excavation of Seyl Alqat at el Baida we have a Neolithic village (*cfr P. E. Q. 1960, 136-145*). Biblical reference to Sela, a stronghold, are many: 2 Kings 14,7; Is. 16, 1; Jg 1,36; Jr 49, 16; Abd 3. Both Petra and Sela have etymologically the same meaning. And very probably the references in the Bible are specifically to Umm el Biyara within Petra.

On the south side of the wadi is a stretch of paved street, recently cleared, and along this, or beside it, you proceed to Nazzal's Camp, where creature comforts await you. The Camp is under the shadow of a great rock, *el Habis*, pierced with sepulchral chambers, in which, you may sleep, if you wish.

Historical landmarks

797 B.C. Sela occupied by Amaziah, King of Judah (2 Kings 14, 7)

c. 650 B.C. Nabataeans paid tribute to Assyria.

312 B.C. Antigonus captures Petra, is waylaid by Nabataeans and army destroyed.

312-63 B.C. Nabataeans built up a great kingdom.

63 B.C.-106 A.D. Dependent on Rome.

106 A.D. Became part of the Roman Province of Arabia and flourished as a Roman city.

c. 200 A.D. Decline set in.

c. 450 A.D. Christianity.

1101 A.D. Crusaders.

1812 A.D. Rediscovered by Burckhardt.

Excavations

The accounts of visitors continued to be the only source of information until 1929. In that year the first scientific archaeological excavations were begun by Horsfield. Sponsored by the Melchett Exploration fund, the area chosen was the Katute dump, at the foot of the Zantur ridge, on the northern slope of Wadi Farasa.

In 1934 the "Conway High Place" was cleared by Albright, and in 1936 the Khazneh Faraun, the Urn Tomb and the Tomb of the Roman Soldier. These excavations under the general direction of Horsfield were backed by the Melchett Fund and the Transjordan Dept. of Antiquities.

A short excavation was carried out by Margaret Murray and J. C. Ellis, for the British School of Archaeology in Egypt in 1937. Two areas were dug, both cavesites, overlooking the Wadi Abu Olleiqa, north of the main city area.

In 1954 the Dept. of Antiquities of Jordan began preservation operations along the Wadi Musa, under the direction of Peter Parr. Part of the retaining wall which runs along the south bank of the Wadi Musa was rebuilt.

In 1955 under the direction of Diana Kirkbride the *cardo maximus* was partly cleared. More was cleared in 1959 by Jordan Antiq. This showed that small dwellings had been built along the pavement after the fall of Petra.

In 1958 the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem opened three trenches along the Roman Street and another south of that area in the Katute dump. The idea was to clarify the occupation sequence of the site. The date of the *Cardo maximus* is still not certain, but most probably was of the reign of Trajan.

In 1959 the British and American Schools carried out a joined expedition under Peter Parr and Philip Hammond. The aim was: (1) to gain a complete picture of the stratigraphy of the site: (2) to complete projects begun by British School in 1959. Trenches III and IV in the area of the Roman Street and *Triumphal Arch* were continued. Trench I in Katute dump was extended; and other trenches, in the northern area, were opened: Trench V along Wadi Abu Olleiqa near Turkmaniyyeh Tomb, below Conway High Place, which ran across the city wall and many tombs: trench VI, south of V, near Qabr Jumei'an, meeting 10 graves. All this helped to secure a typological series of Nabataean and Roman pottery and to determine the earliest Nabataean occupation of Petra.

From these digs it was learned that the Katute Ridge lies on the line of the first town wall, and underneath it is a monumental building, which is Nabataean. The *Cardo* or Paved Street is Roman, of the early 2nd Cent. and under it are Hellenistic sherds. The *Monumental Gate* is not a *Triumphal Arch*, as believed, but an entrance to the sacred precinct surrounding the Qasr el Bint Faraon Temple, the only built monument still extant. It belongs to the Antonine and Severian days and is designed like a *Triumphal Arch*.

In 1960 under the direction of Wright part of the Gate, now called the *Arched Gate*, was reerected and also some of the columns flanking the street. At the same time was erected the portion of the rock-cut column fallen from the façade of the Khazneh (which was originally partly constructed). See *PEQ* 1960, 124-135; 1961, 8-37; *BA* 1960, 29-32; 1961, 25-31; *ADAJ* 4 (1960) 117-122.

In 1961 Philip Hammond carried out excavations at the Main Theatre to ascertain a stratigraphic history of the theatre area, and 3 trenches were dug. In 1962 this work was completed and the orchestra area was cleared by the Jordan Dept. of Antiquities. *BASOR* 1964, 59-66; *ADAJ* 8 (1964) 81-85.

All monuments now visible belong to the Nabataean and Roman periods. The softness of the sandstone demanded a particular style of work, and therein lay the skill of the sculptors. All the monuments except one are carved from the living rock.

Visit to the Monuments

From the open space of the town site valleys open in all directions and days could be spent in following them. They are lined with houses and tombs. Here and there flights of steps wind their ways up the rocky paths to the high places of sacrifice. Most visitors need at least two or three trips.

First Trip — Around the Camp and to the High Place

Immediately south of the Camp is *Qasr el Bint* or *Qasr Bint Pharaon* (Castle of Pharaoh's Daughter) from the Arabic habit of ascribing every great monument to the rulers of ancient Egypt. It is the only built, as opposed to rock-cut, monument still extant. It is a Roman Temple, probably 2nd cent. A.D. One hundred metres east of it is the *Monumental Gate*, an entrance to the sacred precinct, not a Triumphal Arch over the *Cardo Maximus*, as one time believed. In 1960 this Gate, now known as the *Arched Gate* (it has a triple arch) was partly re-erected and some of the columns flanking the Roman Street, the *Cardo Maximus* or great hinge, were re-erected. You may walk along the Street and see the columns and busts (see

Excavations above) ¹.

West of the Camp is the mass of rock, *el Habis* (Prison); this was probably the Acropolis of the Nabataeans and here the Crusaders (Baldwin I) built a fortress. Behind *el Habis* is *Umm el Biyara* (mother of cisterns) 1182 m above sea level, probably the site of Biblical Sela, whence Amaziah cast down the Edomites (2 Kings 14, 7). This is the most difficult to climb, but can be done from the southwest. For detail description see *BA* 1956, 26-36. On the top some evidence of occupation in the Iron Age has been found, but certainly it was a place of refuge rather than a permanent settlement.

Climbing up behind the Temple, we cross a clearing in which stands a column, *Zibb Far'on*, the only remains of the former building. We follow a valley called *Wadi Farasa*, in which are several groups of tombs, only some of whose have special names, because of special interest. First comes the *Statue Tomb* (or *Roman Soldier*), which has three niches with statues. Within this tomb is a large room called the *Triclinium*, or festival Hall, in which were held commemorative feasts for the dead.

Farther up is a small terrace with the *Garden Tomb*. Later the going is more difficult. At one place you come face to face with a *Sculptured Lion*, cut in the face of the rock.

At last you reach the *Obelisks*, made by hewing away the whole top of the summit of the hill; these are symbols of one of the Nabataean divinities. The chief deity was *Dūshara*, who was identified with the Greek Dionysius, and his female consort was *Allāt*.

Ascending the opposite height through some ruins, you come to the *Al Madhbah* (the altar), the great *Sacrificial High Place*: it is a plat-

¹ See also Parr and Starcky, *Three Altars from Petra*, ADAJ 6 (1962). All three were found near the Arched Gate, one in 1959, and two 1960.



Petra — El-Khazneh

Petra

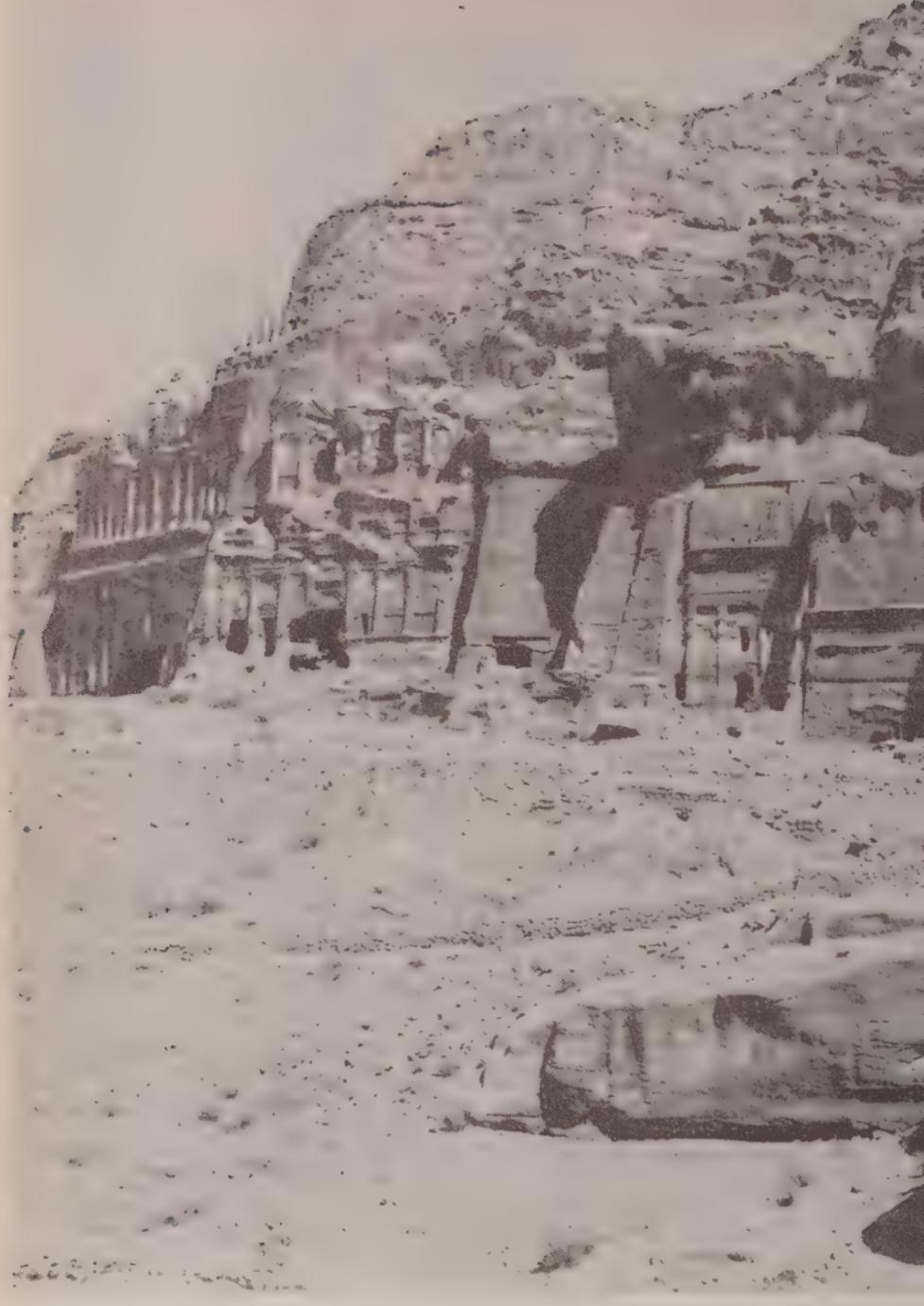
Petra — El-Khazneh





Petra — El-Khazneh

Petra



Petra





Kerak Castle





Shaubak Castle



form hewn out of the rock, with an altar to the west.

From this point you can enjoy a wonderful view of the whole of the rock city.

You continue the circuit and come down by a narrow stairway hewn in the rock and finally emerge near the theatre. The trip will take at least three hours.

Second Trip — Tombs to the N.E. and N. of Petra.

Some of the largest and most elaborate of the tombs are cut in the rock-face to the north-east of the city area in Jebal Khubtha.

From South to North. The *Urn Tomb*, in Greek style, with massive substructures. This tomb was converted into a church by Jason, Bishop of Petra, in 447 A.D.

The *Corinthian Tomb*, decorated in the same style as the *Khazneh*.

The *Palace Tomb*, the façade of which is an imitation of a three-storeyed Roman palace. Part of the top storey is finished in masonry. It is believed that this was the tomb of the kings of Petra.

About 300 metres farther on is the *Tomb of Sextus Florentinus* (c. 140 A.D.), one of the Roman Governors of the Province of Arabia. Above the entrance is a Latin inscription, giving all his official positions.

Continuing in the same direction, you come to *Mughar el Nasara* (Caves of the Christians). Here there are many interesting monuments, tombs, houses, triclinia and Dushara niches. From here a rock-cut road leads to the northern suburb of *El Barid*.

Farther north still is the tomb in the *Wadi Turkmaniyyeh*, which has a long inscription in Nabataean. Above these tombs are other examples of High Places.

To return to the Camp you cross the open ground, where the public buildings once stood. To the very north are traces of the city wall.

You cross the torrent bed: there were at

least two bridges across the torrent, and perhaps it was completely vaulted over. Part of the wall has been constructed to halt erosion.

Third Trip — Ed Deir

Going in a northerly direction from the Camp across Wadi el Siyah, you ascend the Wadi ed Deir. Very soon you reach the remains of the rock-cut road which led up to the temple, which has steps at steep points of ascent. This was repaired in 1961. Soon you pass the *Lion Tomb*, the entrance of which has two lions carved in relief. Higher up a path to the right leads to *El Hammam* (the bath) which contains Nabataean inscriptions: it was a sacred place of some kind. Water collects, drop by drop, in a small trough.

Returning to the former path, now stairs hewn from the rock, you see, before reaching the Deir, the ruins of a Christian hermitage high up on the cliff face on the north of the track, at a point where there is a gap in the ancient road.

Soon after you reach the *Convent* or *Deir*, as the Arabs call it. The ground in front of it has been levelled. At first sight it does not appear large, but it is 50 m wide and 45 m high to the top of the Urn: the door is 8m high. After the Khazneh it is the best preserved monument of Petra, and in many ways is the most imposing monument there. It was undoubtedly a temple, not a tomb.

Inside the chamber is, as usual, very plain, but with a niche in the back wall in which a block of stone representing Dūshara was originally left projecting. A few small crosses carved on the wall suggests that it might have been used for worship in Christian times. The Deir was probably carved about the 3rd cent. A.D.

Facing the Deir, is another growth of rock, from which the view is absolutely splendid. Below you, at 1,220 m is Wadi 'Araba, which runs between the Dead Sea and the Red

Sea. Away to the west are the mountains of the Negev and Sinai. Nearer is *Jebal Harun* (1336 m) with a small Moslem shrine at the summit, which is in local tradition the tomb of Aaron. Since the 3rd cent. A.D. this has been pointed out as the sanctuary of Aaron. Till the 13th cent. it was in the care of Greek Monks. The present shrine was restored by Mamluk Sultan Qâlawûn at the end of 13th cent.¹

You must return by the same way. The trip takes about 3 hours. Passing back through Wadi el Siyah, you may turn right into the wadi to see good examples of rock-cut houses, and farther down a pool with a small waterfall, a blessing on a hot day. A bronze statue was found in the wadi in 1950, see Toynbee, *A Bronze Statue from Petra*, ADAJ 8-9 (1964).

We have mentioned the chief monuments, but actually one could spend weeks in Petra and always find something new. For example there are the suburbs to the north called *Al Baidha*² and *Al Barid*³, and one to the south called El Sabrah. Practically every rock-top has a monument, but you need time, enthusiasm and a guide.

At this point you will have seen the principal monuments of Petra, but only a small part of this miracle of nature which Dean Burgon describes:

¹ See Parr, *A Nabataean Sanctuary on Jebel Na'iz*, ADAJ 6 (1962). Jebel Na'iz is close to the eastern foot of Jebel Harun.

² At Seyl Aqlat near El Baidha and 1½ hrs north of Petra a Neolithic village was excavated by Miss Kirkbride (See P.S.Q. July-Dec. 1960. Also *Excavation of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic Village at Seyl Aqlat*. ADAJ 6 (1962)).

³ Siq el Barid, *Painted Tomb* by Glueck. El Barid is in itself a miniature Petra. A few kms southwest of the village of Wadi Musa is *Khirbet Brak*, a garden suburb of Petra where were found 2 pieces of sculpture, Head of Atargatis and a relief of a winged figure. See Parr, ADAJ vol IV 134.

It seems no work of man's creative hand,
 By labor wrought as wavering fancy
 planned;
 But from the rock as if by magic grown,
 Eternal, silent, beautiful, alone!
 Not virgin-white like that old Doric shrine
 Where erst Athena held her rites divine;
 Not saintly-grey, like many a minster fane
 That crowns the hill and consecrates the
 plane;
 But rosy-red as if the blush of dawn
 That first beheld them were not yet with-
 drawn;
 The hues of youth upon a brow of woe,
 Which man deemed old two thousands
 years ago.
 Match me such marvel save in Eastern
 clime,
 A rose-red city half as old as Time.

The Nabataeans

Every visitor will ask: Who were those people who brought into being such great and beautiful monuments?

Before the emergence of Islam the Near East witnessed the rise and fall of three Arab states: The Nabataean in the south, the Palmyrene in the north and the Ghassanide in-between. The three shared certain common features. They owed their origin to the domestication of nomadic tribes and their prosperity to transit trade. Each allied itself for some time as a buffer state with one of the two world powers — Rome and Persia — and received a subsidy from them. The Nabataean and the Palmyrene powers were finally devoured by Rome, the Ghassanide by Byzantium and Persia.

The Nabataeans first appear in the 6th century B.C. as nomadic tribes in the desert. Little is known of them, except that they paid tribute to the Assyrians. Possibly they can be identified with "the first born of Ismael was Nabajoth" (Gn 25, 13. See also Gn 28, 9; I Ch 1, 29; Is 60, 7). Obadiah in his one chap-

ter of prophecy seems definitely to refer to them.

What early information we have comes from Strabo (born about 54 B.C.) and Diodorus Siculus (lived in the latter half 1st century B.C.). In the 4th century B.C. they were nomads, living in tents, speaking a language akin to Aramaic but with strong Arabic influence, abhorring wine and uninterested in agriculture. Presumably they came originally from Southern Arabia. No wonder some believe that they were descendants of the Rechabites. Read Jeremiah 35. In the following century they abandoned the pastoral in favour of the sedentary way of life and engaged in agriculture and trade. By the end of the second century they were a highly organized society.

The first fixed date in Nabataean history is 312 B.C. when they succeeded in repulsing the attacks of two expeditions against their Rock under one of Alexander's successors, Antigonus. Their metropolis, which had started as a mountain fortress had become a caravan station and was strongly fortified. Petra originally belonged to the Horites, and then to the Edomites, and no doubt finally, all three peoples made up the one population.

From the beginning they appear to have engaged in trade, and as soon as they were established in Petra, they devoted their energies to maintaining this trade. They guaranteed the safe-conduct of the caravans in return for toll. They were in a favourable position geographically, at the point of convergence of several of the principal caravan routes. In time they obtained control of more country and consequently of more caravan routes. Contact with the outside world introduced new cultures, but they developed a style of architecture of their own, a mixture of Greek and Assyrian, a characteristic feature of which is a kind of stepped pinnacle. Rock faces were smoothed, great tombs suggesting a cult of the dead were carved out of the mountains.

and on the top of the hills places of sacrifice were levelled off. There are also examples of *mazzeboth*, or tapering columns, familiar in holy places of ancient Semitic worship.

One of their great problems was water, and their great success in storing water was the secret of the success of the Nabaean Kingdom. Those interested in this should read *The Other Side of the Jordan*, by Nelson Glueck. In Petra the two springs in the city became insufficient and water was brought from Wadi Musa. Everywhere cisterns were built and channels were cut in the hillsides to collect the rain water.

Their first known king was Aretas I (the Hellenized form of the Arabic name Harith or Harithat) in 169: he is called "tyrant of the Arabs." At this time their territory extended to the Arnon. Aretas refused protection to Jason when he fled from Jerusalem (2 M 5, 8). Under Aretas II (Erotimus 110-96 B.C.) the Kingdom was enlarged but he failed to link up with Gaza, as he wished (*Ant.* 13, 360). Under Obodas I (Obidath) part of the Kingdom east of the Dead Sea was taken by Alexander Jannaeus. During the reign of Aretas III (85-60 B.C.), they reached their zenith, when Damascus invited them to rule the city, where they remained, under the suzerainty of Rome till c. 68 B.C. Aretas III, coming to the assistance of John Hyrcanus helped in the siege of Aristobulus in Jerusalem, but was ordered by Scaurus, Pompey's general, to withdraw, whereupon Aristobulus attacked and heavily defeated him.

In 63 B.C. Aretas III repulsed an attack by Pompey, who wished to extend the Roman frontier as far as the Red Sea. This was the first contact with Rome.

While Aretas held back Rome he opened the door wide for Graeco-Roman influences, for which he earned the title of Philhellene. He was the first to strike coinage, for which he adopted the Ptolemaic standard. Into his

capital he imported Syrian-Greek artisans, and it was probably then that el Khazneh and the theatre were built. Petra became a Hellenistic city.

But Rome did not remain inactive. Scaurus made a second unsuccessful attempt on Petra, and Gabinius a third. From this time on the Nabataean Kingdom became an ally of Rome. Malichus I (c. 55-28 B.C.) sent a cavalry contingent to Julius Caesar for his operations in Egypt. But later in 40 B.C. he refused refuge to Herod the Great when the Parthians invaded Palestine. For the intrigues of this period, in which Malichus had a share, see *The Herods of Judaea* by A. Jones.

His successor Obodas III (28-9 B.C.) encouraged Aelius Gallus, prefect of Egypt to undertake the ill-fated expedition in 24 against Arabia Felix. Strabo, a friend of Gallus, blames the failure on the perfidy of the guide "Syllaeus the minister of the Nabataeans"; who was supposed to have poisoned King Obodas. He was buried at Oboda (Abdeh) on the road from Petra to El'Arish.

Under the long and prosperous rule of Aretas IV (9 B.C. -40 A.D.) the Kingdom attained its height. He called himself *Rahem ammoh*, "lover of my people". The process of romanization was continued by him. It was a governor of this king who endeavoured to arrest Paul at Damascus (2 Co 11, 32).

Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, married a daughter of this Aretas and divorced her in favour of Herodias, the prime mover in the murder of John the Baptist (Mt 14, 6-11). The resentful father, who had once sent a force against the Jews to help Varus, now waged war against Antipas, Rome's ally¹.

At its height the Kingdom included southern Palestine, a big part of Transjordan, south-

¹ This is the Aretas of *The Big Fisherman* by Lloyd Douglas.

eastern Syria and northern Arabia. The Kingdom, however, was cut in two by the territory of the Decapolis Union. It seems, although the "King's Highway" was used, that the Wadi Sirhan was the main connecting link between the two parts.

Beyond a few facts gleaned from inscriptions, coins and classical writings not much is known about the last rulers of Nabataea. Beginning with Obodas II, coins display the effigy of the queen together with the king. King Malichus II (40-70 A.D.) helped Vespasian in 67 with 1000 horse and 5000 foot in his war against the Jews. During his reign Damascus passed into Roman hands. The last king was Rabel II (75-106)¹, during whose reign the Romans, who had so far tolerated the Kingdom annexed the Nabataean country and added it to the Province of Arabia, with Bosra as the leading city and later as capital. Arabia Petraea was no more. The Romans took over the city and redesigned it on the regular Roman model with a cardo, main street, etc. Part of this street has been excavated recently.

Once before, the rulers and people of Petra had absorbed the Greek culture, and now they took with the same zeal to the culture of Rome, and the change is reflected in the style of architecture. Tomb façades grow larger, columns are introduced, and the triangular pediment replaced the stepped pinnacle. They retained, however, a certain amount of individuality.

The Emperor Trajan built a great road connecting Syria with the Red Sea, and it passed to the east of Petra and brought to it great prosperity. Some of the finest monuments date from the Roman period. In fact, it became one of the wonders of the world, for which reason even to-day in its ruins it is unique.

¹ This king is also called Malichus III. There are considerable discrepancies in the numbering and dating of the list of Kings.

By the latter half of the second century A.D. a decline set in. There were several causes, among them: the rise of Palmyra, a rival desert metropolis in the north; the rise of the new Persian Empire; the diversion of the Arabian caravans from the land to the Red Sea route.

The city continued to be inhabited, when in the Byzantine period Christianity came to Petra, and some large tombs were converted into churches, as the Urn Tomb.

Little by little it sank, and by the time of the Arab conquest in the seventh century, Petra was a place of little consequence, only partly occupied. Soon it sank into obscurity.

For a while it reappeared when the Crusaders erected a fortress there. Baldwin I entered the area to overawe the local Moslems in response to a plea from the Greek monks of St. Aaron (Jebel Harum) in 1101. In 1172 Toghtekin of Damascus camped at Wadi Musa, but was routed by Baldwin, again at the behest of the local monks. In 1192 Pagan the Butler, who then held the fief of Oultre Jordain garrisoned more strongly the existing fortress at Petra (Li Vaux Moyse) situated on el Wueira. When that and the fortress on el Habis (called Sel) were erected, it is difficult to determine. On the fall of the Latin Kingdom Arabia Petraea passed to Al Adil, brother of Saladin, and then to An Nasir, under Al Kamil of Egypt in 1229. With the rise of the Mamluks the country passed to Izzidin Abek of Egypt in 1253. Sultan Baibars visited Nebi Harum in the 14th cent. After that dark night descended upon Petra, and Nature began slowly but surely to eradicate the works of Man.

The very memory of Petra was lost, its situation forgotten. It became a legend. Explorers tried to find it, but it remained hidden for years. Finally in August 1812 Jean Louis Burckhardt stood within its walls. He was the first European in centuries to look upon the fallen wonder that was Petra and to return to tell the

world. Under the ruse of sacrificing a goat in honour of St. Haroun, he persuaded a guide to lead him through the Siq. In his brief stay, made doubly dangerous by his attempt to take notes and inspect the ruins, Burckhardt saw enough to convince him that he had rediscovered the ancient Petra.

Since then Petra has had many visitors. At one time travellers visited Petra on the way from Cairo, continuing by Hebron to Jerusalem. The British Consul Finn in 1851 went to Petra and made an agreement with Sheikh Abdur-Rahman of Hebron for the safe-conduct of travellers from Petra to Jerusalem on payment of a fixed toll.

The Religion of the Nabataeans

The chief deities of the Nabataeans were Dūshara and Allāt; the former symbolized by a block of stone or obelisk, the latter is associated with springs and water. Dūshara or the Hellenized form Dūshares is from the Arabic Dhu-esh-Shera, meaning He-of-Shera. The Shera are the mountains of the Petra region, the Seir of the Gn 14, 6.

Little is known about the ceremonies connected with Nabataean worship. It was of the common Semitic type based on agricultural fertility rites. It preserved elements of the old worship associated with "high places" and standing stones. Dūshara, head of the pantheon, was a sun-deity. Allāt, chief goddess of Arabia, was a moon-goddess. Herodotus identified Allāt with Aphrodite Urania. Other Nabataean goddesses were Manāh and al 'Uzza, of Koran fame. Hubal also figures in the inscriptions. The Aramaean goddess Atargatis was represented at Tannur as the goddess of grain, foliage, fruit and fish. Serpent worship formed a part of the religion. As merchants they carried religion with them and in Puteoli (Pozzuoli) stood altars on which two golden camels were offered by a worshipper to the god Dūshara. (See *Arab-Deity, Aktab-Kutba: Milik and Teixidor* in *BASOR* 163).

The Commerce of the Nabataeans

The commerce of Petra penetrated to some of the farthest points of the then civilized world. It left epigraphical traces scattered from Puteoli, for a time a port of Rome, to Gerrha on the Persian Gulf. Other Nabataean records have been found in Miletus, Rhodes, the eastern Delta of the Nile, Upper Egypt and at the mouth of the Euphrates. Chinese records testify to Nabataean business enterprise.

Myrrh, spices and frankincense from South Arabia, rich silk fabrics from Damascus and Gaza, henna from Ascalon, glassware and purple from Sidon and Tyre, and pearls from the Persian Gulf, made up the principal commodities. The native produce of Nabataea comprised gold, silver, copper and sesame oil, which they used instead of olive oil. They exploited the asphalt from the Dead Sea while they worked the copper mines in the Wadi 'Araba. We know from Diodorus Siculus that the Nabataeans controlled the Dead Sea bitumen industry in the Graeco-Roman period. They had a monopoly over the industry and Egypt was their principal market, where it was definitely used for embalming purposes and perhaps other things. It was correctly named *asphaltos*. The floating masses once observed on the sea are no longer there, but geological disturbances may account for curtailment of quantity (see good account of this in BA No. 2, 1959 by Philip Hammond). In exchange, raw silk was imported from China. They protected the caravan routes, imposed taxes on goods in transit and on some goods exercised a kind of monopoly. Strabo found them "so much inclined to acquire possessions that they publicly fine anyone who has diminished his possessions, and also confer honours on anyone who has increased them".

Arabic in speech, Aramaic in writing, Semitic in religion, Graeco-Roman in art and architecture, the Nabataean culture was a mixture with a certain amount of individuality.

There were no Arabic letters at that time, and Aramaic was used in writing. The Nabataean script gradually differentiated itself from the Aramaic and about the middle of the first century B.C. assumed its distinctive characters. What gives added significance to Nabataean characters is the fact that the Arabic alphabet is directly descended from them.

Strabo's description of a royal banquet in which "no one drinks more than eleven cupfuls, each time using a different golden cup", sounds like a ritual ceremony. Their old distaste for wine had undergone a great change!

As already mentioned their attempts to provide food for a growing population met with great success. No other people of this part of the world pushed the boundaries of agriculture so far into the desert as they did. Nobody so successfully tackled mountain sides and dry river beds for the purpose of catching and conserving the heavy rains of a short but wet season. The remarkable ingenuity evidenced by the Nabataeans in the water works at Petra, el Barid and Rekhemtein in Wadi Ram made it possible for them to maintain themselves even in desert areas, where otherwise life would be impossible during the dry season of the year.

It is easy to sum up the national character of this people whose descendants to-day are to be found among the nomads of the southern desert. They were a sensible, acquisitive, democratic people absorbed in trade and agriculture. The society had no slaves and no paupers. There was peace and toleration without persecution. The king was so democratic that he often rendered an account of his rule to a popular assembly.

From Petra to Aqaba

(128 Km)

From Elji, you turn right and go south on what is the main road to Ma'an (38 kms). To go to Aqaba it is not necessary to go to Ma'an. You continue on the hill country to Basta.

Km 305 — *Basta*: beside the road in the valley west of Basta you can see a circular basin, in which there is a good spring. Shortly after this on the opposite side of the road is *Ail* with Nabataean and Roman remains. After 16 kms you come to a forking, left to Ma'an, right to Aqaba. Following the Aqaba road, after 7 kms a branch on the right leads to *Gharandad* (Aridella), 52 kms, which is not much more than a Police Post in the Wadi Araba.

Here the road leaves a high hill to the left (1531 m), *Rujm Sadaqa*, the ancient *Zodokatha* with Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine and Arab remains. The Roman Road also passed through this opening.

Whether you travel on the Ma'an-Petra will notice a stone wall running across country, parallel to the old Roman Road, a stone wall called *Khat Shibib*, a defence line built in the 10th cent. A.D. to mark the boundary between the desert and the sown.

Road from Ma'an (20,5 kms), comes in on the left. The road meets simultaneously the main road and railway, which ends shortly after at *Ras en Nagb* Station which is 38 kms by road from Ma'an. *Ras en Nagb* which stands at the end of this monotonous plateau averaging c. 1,200 m above sea-level, is today just the railway terminal, but it has remains of the Iron Age and of the Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine periods.

Beyond the station you come to the highest point of this mountain ridge (1573 m), *Nagb Istar*, and a beautiful view opens up in front

of you : rows upon rows of mountains, and here and there mountains that resemble icebergs in the vast plain of desert. The plain has pink sand and the hills are red, brown and white. To the southeast are the sandstone mountains of Jebal Ram: to the southwest are the tapering mountains of the granite range of Shera (Mount Seir). The whole area down as far as Saudi Arabia is called the *Hasma*. Away to the southwest is the ruin of a little town, *Humeima*, with Nabataean and Roman remains; it is identified with *Ammatha*. It was in this little town the propaganda originated which eventually led to the overthrow of the Umayyad dynasty in favour of the Abbasids, and led to the transfer of the capital from Damascus to Baghdad.

The road continues down a spur and then heads across the plain.

On every side rise the sandstone hills, which at a distance look bare. At close range traces of human occupation can be seen in cisterns, dams, with graffiti in Nabataean, Thamudic and even Greek.

Half way across the plain is the Police Post of *Quweira*, where both Nabataeans and Romans both had a fort, by which also passed the Roman Road. The old Nabataean cistern is still in use for man and beast¹.

A few kms farther on a signpost "Ram" points the way to *Ram* and *Mudawwara*. After 18 kms a track on the right goes to *Ram* (12 kms) and the straight track runs on to

¹ The Desert Police Force, which is in great part a camel corps, is responsible for law and order in the outlying districts. Their main garment is a high-necked khaki tunic, skirted and reaching to the ankles. Crossed red leather bandoliers and belt are festooned with pistol and rifle cartridges; a 3.8 Colt on the thigh and a curved dagger in a silver scabbard in front. On the head they wear the red and white checkered *She-magh* or kuffieh, held in place by a black *egal* into which a silver badge is stuck (see Roubicek: "Echo of the Bugle, Chapter IV. F. P.P. 1974).

Mudawwara (77 kms), which is the most southerly point of Jordan's frontier with Saudi Arabia.

This is the Wadi Ram described in Lawrence's *Revolt in the Desert*. The track runs in many places between sheer cliffs 300-500 ms high, and brings you back to the main road near 'Aqaba. It is well worth a visit, if the extra two hours are available. "Deep valleys, 16 m across, divide the crags, whose planes were smoothed by the weather into huge apses and bays, and enriched with surface-fretting and fracture-like design. Caverns high up on the precipice were round like windows; others near the foot gaped like doors. Dark streams ran down the shadowed front for as much as 70 ms like accidents of use. The cliffs were striated vertically, in their granular rock; whose main order stood on two hundred feet of broken stone deeper in colour and harder in texture. This plinth did not, like the sandstone, hang in folds like cloth; but chipped itself into loose course of scree, horizontal as the footing of a wall" (*Seven Pillars of Wisdom*).

Diana Kirkbride made a survey of Wadi Ram in May 1959. See *BASOR* 156 (1959) *Nabataean Goddess Al-Kutba and Her Sanctuaries*.

As you go across the two large mud flats, you have on either side sandstone hills rising sheer from the flat plain, giving long vistas down the valleys. Keep to the western side of the valley and be careful if it has just rained.

To the north of the first part of the track is *Jebel er Ratama* with Nabataean and Byzantine remains. Near the turn south to the right of the hills is *Bair Ram el Atiq* with remains of the Iron Age and the Nabataean and Byzantine periods.

If you stop at any place where you see large boulders near the track you will find Thamudic graffiti scratched on the sides. There are hundreds of these short inscriptions in

Wadi Ram. These inscriptions occur from southern Saudi Arabia to Ma'an, but only few north of that. They were apparently scratched by centuries of camel-drivers. The tribe Thamúd had its centre near Mada'in Salih in Arabia¹. The script belongs to the South Semitic group of alphabets, the only surviving example of which is Amharic: the Abyssinians borrowed it from South Arabia. The Nabataean script, and the modern Arabic and Hebrew scripts, belong to the North Semitic group (see Hitti: *History of the Arabs* p. 70). Another interesting thing to be found near the foot of the hills are groups of paved enclosures, the purpose of which is unknown.

Next to the great massif of Jebel Ram is a Desert Patrol fort. Behind the fort are the ruins of a Nabataean temple, partly excavated, similar, but smaller, than that of Tannur. For a description of this temple see literature in *LA XIV* 210.

The track continues beyond the Fort for 44 kms, joining the main road to Aqaba at Khirbet Kithara, but it is not advisable to use this track. It is easier to retrace your steps.

Continuing south on the main road, the plain gradually closes into the gloomy defile of the *Wadi el Yutm*, which is the route followed in the Exodus. The road follows the Roman Road.

After 21 kms you come to *Khirbet el Khalidi*, an old Nabataean fort, still in part standing, and the cisterns, cleared during World War II, still in use.

Continuing for another 14 kms you reach *Khirbet Kithara*, another fort with Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine remains. From here a track goes back by *Wadi Yutm el Umran* to Ram (see above).

¹ There is a very good description of Mada'in Salih in *Arumco World* Sept.-Oct. 1965. It has many monuments that closely resemble those of Petra.

The Wadi narrows. The mountains rise and remains of a dam appear in the valley. and then the road opens out into the Wadi Araba and before you is the shimmering blue of the Red Sea, yes, blue, despite its name.

Aqaba

Aqaba, from being a mere village in 1940, has now become a town. A new port was constructed in 1958-60. It is Jordan's only outlet to the sea and most of its imports and exports (especially phosphate) pass through it. The Catholics have a small church with a Melkite priest.

There is plenty of sweet water at not more than 2 metres below the surface, even on the sea shore. There is good fishing offshore. There are abundant coral reefs close to the shore with the finest underwater scenery (see photos in *National Geographic* Dec. 1946). The feathery black shrub is actually coral (*Anipatharia*) called *Yusr* in Arabic. From it is made *masbaha* the Moslem rosary beads. It takes on a polished look, like jet.

In few places in the world do four countries come so close together: Jordan in the centre, with Saudi Arabia to its south, and Israel to the west, with Egypt just southwest and *Jaziret Far'on*, "Pharaoh's Isle" in the Gulf. The island is formed by two hills joined by an isthmus. The northern hump has considerable remains which seem to be post-Crusader. In 1116 King Baldwin occupied the Island, then known as *Ile de Graye*, and the Crusaders held it till 1170, when it was taken by Saladin. The German pilgrim, Thetmar, in 1217 passed there and found it in the hands of the Sultan of Cano but there were French, English and Latin prisoners on it. The present ruins are Saracenic. There is no trace of Crusader work, but some of Byzantine (Savignac, *RB* 1913, 588-596).

Ezion Geber

The Israelites passed by Ezion-Geber on their way to Moab (Dt 2,8), but the site was unknown until discovered by the German, Fritz Frank. In 1938-40 it was excavated by the American School of Oriental Research under Dr. Glueck, who describes the work in "*The Other Side of the Jordan*", pages 89-113.

From the Bible we know that Elath (Palm Trees) and Ezion-Geber (Giants Black) were separate sites (Dt 2,8). "And King Solomon made a fleet in Ezion-Geber, which is beside Eloth (Elath), on the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent his servants in the fleet, sailors that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir and they brought from thence to King Solomon four hundred and twenty talents of gold" (1 Kings 9,26-8). It was probably through this port that the Queen of Sheba came on her visit to Jerusalem (1 Kings 10). "For the King's navy, once in three years, went with the navy of Hiram by sea to Tharsis, and brought from thence gold, and silver, and elephants' teeth (ivory), and gold, apes, and peacocks (10,22); ... brought from Ophir, great plenty of thyine trees (Sandal wood), and precious stones" (10,11). Later Josaphat of Judah with Ahaziah of Israel built a new fleet at Ezion-Geber, but it was wrecked on the rocks (1 Kings 22,49). Josaphat (or Jehoshaphat) (876-849) certainly held the trade routes "and the Arabians brought him cattle, seven thousand seven hundred rams, and as many she-goats" (2 Ch 17,11). Again we are told that Azarias (Uzziah) who reigned from 785 to 740 "built Elath and restored it to Judah" (2 Kings 14,22). Rasin King of Syria in 734, turned out the Jews: "At that time Rasin King of Syria restored Aila (Elath) to Syria (Edom) and drove the men of Judah out of Aila: and the Edomites came into Aila, and dwelt there unto this day" (2 Kings 16,6). From this time on it is known as Aila or Ailane, or

Ælana or Elana. The Arabs called it Ailah till the 15th century; then changed it to 'Aqaba, probably from the *ascent*, which, mentioned in Nb 21,4, had caused the pilgrims of Mecca so much fatigue that Ahmed Ibn Tûlûn (868-884) had a route cut through the mountain and it took the name 'Aqabat-Aylah, and in time 'Aqaba.

In Roman times the 10th Legion (Freten-sis) was stationed there, and in the 4th century it was the seat of a bishop. Remains of a Christian church have been found, dedicated to two warrior saints, SS. Theodore and Longinus: also a capital with half length figures of St George and St Isidore, as the Greek inscriptions indicate (see *Town of Nebo*, p. 233). "In A.H. 9 Mohammad stationed a garrison at Tabûk, on the frontier of Ghassânland, and without a single engagement concluded treaties of peace with the Christian chief of Aylah and the Jewish tribes..." (Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 119). Ailah in 1116 was occupied by Baldwin I, but the Crusader fortress was taken by Saladin in 1170. In 1182 Renaud de Châtillon, Lord of Karak, brought boats there from Ascalon and remained master of the Red Sea until Saladin opposed him with another fleet of boats.

It remained an important town during the Middle Ages. When the fort (*el Qal'a*) was built is not certain but Sultan Nasir, about 1320 had a hand in it, as had Qansuh el Ghuri, the last of the Mamluk Sultans, about 1505. An inscription in the gateway gives his name. The fort is near the sea, not far from the port. Much of it was removed in the past for building purposes.

As a result of tension in her relations with the Porte, Britain became sensitive over developments in the parts of Turkish Palestine bordering on Egypt. This is illustrated in what is known as the "Aqaba incident". The frontiers of Mohammad Ali's fief had been fixed by the Convention of London, 1841, which

left Egypt in possession of the Sinai peninsula and of a number of Red Sea garrison towns, including Aqaba, in order to protect the Egyptian pilgrims' route to Mecca. In 1892 when the Khedive Abbas Hilmi succeeded to the throne, the Sultan wished to limit his authority to Egypt. Britain, then in occupation of Egypt, objected. This led in time to Lord Cromer sending Bramly Bey in 1906 to construct barracks near Aqaba, the idea being to obstruct the building of a branch line of the Hejaz Railway from Ma'an to Aqaba. This link would have joined the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, which would have been detrimental to the interests of Britain, which as master of the Suez Canal, held a monopoly of routes between the two seas. And there was talk of an alternative canal from Aqaba to Gaza. Turkish troops forcibly occupied the area but in Sept. 1906 the Turks withdrew and the frontier between Egypt and Palestine was fixed on the Rafah-Taba line (see Frischwasser-Ra'-anan, *Frontiers of a Nation*).

In June 1925 the districts of Ma'an and Aqaba were declared part of the Amirate of Transjordan. King Ibn Sa'ud did not recognize the annexation, as till then they were considered part of his kingdom, but he took no action to support his claim.

In 1965 the Government decided to construct an international airport and hotels for the accommodation of tourists.

Ruins of Ezion-Geber (Solomon's Mines).

The small mound of Tell el Kheleifeh lies half way between the cliffs on both sides of the plain and 500 metres back from the sea in a waste of sand. It was especially built on this site to take advantage of the winds that blow up and down the gorge. Three distinct cities have been revealed in the excavations. The first belongs to the tenth century, the time of Solomon. This first city was probably destroyed by Shishak (Sheshonk I 954-924 B.C.). A second

city seems to have been destroyed by fire. A third city, which may not have been Israelite, arose, and this may have been Elath of 2 Kings 14,22; 16,6. Jars bearing South Arabian letters show connection with the Minaeans. There are many examples of trade with Egypt. Whether it continued to operate later is doubtful, but the mines of Wadi 'Araba contributed to a later rich civilization, that of the Nabataeans.



From Aqaba to Amman

Aqaba to Ma'an 119 kms

Ma'an to Amman 216 kms

You now follow the new road. You return by the same route and reach Ma'an. It is the administrative centre of the southern district, which is inhabited chiefly by the Bedouin tribes. The total population of the district is only 62,000 as it appears in the 1972 Census. It is situated on the edge of the desert: beyond it is Jebal Tubaiq, hilly country which merges into the sandstone district of Hasma to the south.

Ma'an is actually an oasis in the desert: it is really two towns *Ma'an el Qibliyah* (South) and *Ma'an esh Shamiyah* (North). According to Hitti (*History of the Arabs* p. 52), Ma'an was the centre of Minaean power in northwestern Arabia. It then passed to the Sabaeans, then to the Lihyanites and later to the Nabataeans.

The town is built almost entirely of sun-dried mud brick. It is unusual in that, most houses still raise drinking water from shallow holes beside the buildings. The town has only a small spring, visible from the bridge near the prison. In former days it had a wonderful supply of water for the irrigation of the land east of the town: this came by channels cut in the rock from Ain Dawawi about 3 kms southwest of the town¹.

The railway station (with a small hotel) and airfield are quite a distance from the town proper. Many visitors to Petra arrive here

¹ On March 11, 1966, a flash flood swept down the wadi, killing 100 and injuring 250 people and destroying part of the town.

by train or air. Beyond a square pilgrimage fort (18th cent.) the town has no archaeological interest, although occupied by the Romans.

In 1965 the Government decided to build a "pilgrim town" to accommodate the Moslem pilgrims on their way to Mecca. From Ma'an there is a desert track to El Mudawara, a long desert trak of 121 kms. There is also a desert track to *Bayir*, passing by *El Jafr* fort, again a long desert trak of 183 kms.

From Ma'an the road runs due north through the desert and almost parallel to the railroad. In fact seeing the train steaming along through the desert is surprising. It is a dismal stretch of country, which seems merely created on the way to some other place. The road and rail cross at '*Uneiza Station*'. There is a track on the left to Shaubak (26 kms). There is also a disused railway track. The road and rail hug each other till the Station *Jurf ed Darawish*, also called *Qasr el Bint* (Lady's Fort). The old pilgrim track from Ma'an is also known as *Tariq el Bint* (Lady's Way). A daughter of Sultan Suleiman or Selim made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and disliking *Tariq er Rasif* (the paved way, i.e. the Roman Road) followed the desert route. *Qasr el Bint* at *Jurf ed Darawish* is supposed to commemorate this trip. From here there is a track to meet the main road above Tafila.

On this track is *Thuwana* on the Roman Road, with Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine remains. *Thuwana* is identified with the ancient *Theman*, the home of Eliphaz, one of Job's friends. In Gn 36,11, *Theman* is the son of Eliphaz of the descendants of Esau, father of the Edomites in the highlands of Seir. It was famous for the proverbial wisdom of its inhabitants: "Is wisdom no more in *Theman*? Counsel is perished from her children: their wisdom is become unprofitable" (Jr 49,7). Later the prophets foretell its destruction (Am 1,12). While the Book of Job has characteristic Arab flavour, and many commentators have

claimed that it stems from an Arab original, this theory remains unproved. The land of Uz, whether it be Edom, Jebel Hauran or Transjordan was familiar to the Palestinian by report or personal experience. The simple portrait of the patriarchal Sheikh Job admirably suited the author's purpose. Further along the track is *Abur*, lying on the Roman Road, with Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine remains.

The road, skirting the railroad, after a dusty run, reaches *Hasa* Station, beside which is *Qal'at el Hasa*, a pilgrim fort, with the well still in use. Here are the phosphate works.

Following the desert and crossing and recrossing the railway you reach *Qatrana Station*, with an Arab fort and a great reservoir. From Qatrana a good road (42 kms) leads west to Karak, through good agricultural country. It passes near to *Lajjun*, the site of a great Roman camp, and one of the few places where the word *Legio* has stuck. On the hill above Lajjun is a very large Early Bronze Age site, with standing monoliths.

Following the road to Karak a track goes off on the right to *Adir* (a site reoccupied only some 25 years ago). Adir has prehistoric Bronze and Iron Age remains, as well as Nabataean and Byzantine. At Ader a temple has been found, near which are 4 menhirs all assigned to a date not later than 2000 B.C. Portions of frieze of a Nabataean temple was also found there. See *LA*, XIV, p. 169, 213. Canova (*op. cit.*) gives 14 inscriptions from Adir. The Latins and Melkites are served from Karak.

At km 52 a track (15 kms) goes off on the right to *Qasr Hammam*, an Arab fort, where there are hills of coloured marble, red, blue and green, the cutting and polishing of which now forms a considerable local industry.

The road again follows the desert way to *Qasr ed Dab'a* (near the station of the same name), with a small fort, restored by Othman Pasha of Damascus in 1766 as one of the strong points along the Hajj Road, following the Bed-

ouin attacks on the pilgrims in 1757.

The road runs north to meet the main road at a point 18 kms from Amman. In spring time along this way, the black iris is a characteristic flower. It leaves to the right *Jiza* also called *Ziza* with an Arab fort and a vast Roman reservoir. In 1840 the fort of *Jiza* was the scene of a hard fight between the Bene Sakhr Bedouins and the troops of Ibrahim Pasha. The *Jiza* plain saw another battle in 1924 between the Wahabis and the R.A.F. The reservoir has been repaired. It holds 23 million gallons. The railway station is northeast of the town, and on the track that leads to the palace of *Mushatta*, built by the Umayyad Caliph, el Walid II, in 743. A track also leads to *Madaba* (16 kms). East of *Jiza* is a prehistoric site in *Wadi Dhobai*. *Wadi Dhobai* is 40 kms southeast of Amman. First noticed by Kirkbride and investigated by L. Harding, excavations were made there by Dr. J. d'A. Waechter and V. M. Seton-Williams in 1937-8 (cfr. *JPOS XVIII* 171-186, 292-298 where there are good sketches, also showing the Roman dam in the wadi).

To the right of the road is *El Qastal*, a Roman fort and a fortified camp of the Byzantine limes, *Castra Zizia*. Tristram saw there "several perfect Christian Churches", which were destroyed by the soldiers of Ibrahim Pasha¹.

El Qastal, according to *Isfahani*, was built by the Ghassanide. Al Harith ibn Jabalah (529-69), but was used by Walid II.

The road goes on to Amman or to Na'ur to meet the Amman-Jerusalem road.

The Ghassanids

The bursting of the great dam of Ma'rib is cited as explaining the migration of a South

¹ For two martyrs of *Zizia*, Zenon and Zenas see Milik in *LA X* (1959-60) 163.

Arabian tribe into the Hauran. This was the Banu-Ghassan, who chose the year of the breaking of the dam as the starting-point for an era of their own. In the Hauran they replaced earlier Arab settlers, the Dajâ'im of the Salih tribe, as masters of the territory under Roman suzerainty. In the course of the fourth century the Ghassanides became Christians. The founder of their dynasty was Jafrah ibn 'Amr Muzaiqiya, whose date is uncertain. In Arabic chronicles the number of kings varies from 11 to 32. In Byzantine histories the main point of interest is contact with Constantinople.

One of their greatest kings was al Harith ibn Jabalah (al A'raj, the lame) who in 528 fought the Lakhmids of el Hirah, which was a buffer state of Persia. For his services the Emperor Justinian appointed Al Harith lord over all the Arab tribes of Syria, and he must have considered himself as successor to the kings of Nabataea. He helped to destroy the Samaritans who fled across the Jordan after their failure against the Emperor. In 563 he visited Justinian's court, where as a Bedouin Sheikh he made a lasting impression. While in Constantinople he secured the appointment of Yaqûb al Barda'i (Jacob Bardaeus) of Edessa as prelate of the Syrian Monophysite Church, which led to the spread of the doctrine all over Syria. The kingdom then reached its height, spreading from as near as Petra to as far as al Rusafah, north of Palmyra. Bosra, whose cathedral was built in 512 A.D. (Crowfoot, *Early Churches in Palestine*) became the ecclesiastical capital of the region and was also a trading centre. Moslem tradition makes Mohammad a visitor there. The political capital was never more than a moveable camp.

Al Harith was succeeded by his son al Mundhir (c. 569-82), who was not on such good terms with the Emperor, and was finally exiled to Sicily. Al Nu'mâm, his eldest son, succeeded him, and failing to co-operate was carried off to

Constantinople. The Kingdom was then split into several sections, and anarchy followed until Persia occupied Syria in 611-14.

Later the Ghassanides fought with the Byzantines against the Arabs and the last king Jabalah ibn al Aylam fought at the battle of Yarmuk (636).

The splendour of the Ghassanide court has been immortalized in the anthologies of several pre-Islamic poets, such as al Nâbighah al Dhubayni and Hasan ibn Thabit, in Nâbighah's encomium:

"Theirs is a liberal nature that God gave
To no men else; their virtues never fail.
Their home the Holy Land: their faith upright:
They hope to prosper if good deals avail.
Zoned in fair wise and delicately shod,
They keep the Feast of Palms, when maidens pale,
Whose scarlet silken robes on trestles hang,
Greet them with odorous boughs and bid them hail.
Long lapped in ease tho' bred to war, their limbs
Green-shouldered vestments, white-sleeved,
richly veil".

(Nicholson: *Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 54).

PART III (NORTH)

Amman — Jarash (48 Km)

From Amman to Suweilah

New excavations on the Ammonite sites all around the capital Amman are carried out by the Department of Antiquities: Ruzin el Halfouf, Khirbet el Hazzan, Khalde, Jell Safut, *Tell Siran* were excavated. In the later a bronze bottle was found with an Aramaic inscription relating works of King Amminadab:

"The works of Amminadab, king of the Ammonites the son of Hiṣṣal'el, king of the Ammonites the son of Amminadab, king of the Ammonites the vineyard and the gardens and the canals and cisterns.

May he rejoice and be glad for many days and long years."

At *Khirbet el Hajjar* two Ammonite statues and Iron I-II settlement have been excavated.

At Suweilah you turn right on the main road to Jarash.

Km 15. — *Safut* is a poor village standing amid extensive Roman-Byzantine ruins. The doorway of a Byzantine Church, of St. Macarius, stands in desolate isolation to the east of the village. There is a Latin (1933) and an Orthodox Parish.

The road runs through the plain of Baq'a, then through the Wadi es Salihi, with the Mountains of Gilead straight ahead.

Km 19. — *Ain el Basha*, with Byzantine ruins.

Km 22. — *Abu Nuzeir*.

Km 31 — *Er Rumman* which is a Circassian village.

Km 41. — We cross the iron bridge over the River Zarqa. Along the river bank are wattle trees and thickets of oleanders, with pink blossoms. Their leaves being poisonous escape the goats. Around here you may see Egyptian vultures (*Neophron percnopterus*). This is the biblical Jabbok which divided Gilead into the Upper Gilead (Ajlun) and the Lower Gilead (el Balqa) (cfr. Abel, *Géogr.* I). From here the appearance of the country begins to change. *El Majdal aerea* is intensivly cultivated. Little by little you enter a wooded country, the most beautiful in the whole East of Jordan. A big tree near the road is known as King Abdallah tree and a road leads to Dibbin, where the Baptists have an agricultural mission. Dibbin forest has Aleppo pines, several species of oak, arbutus and cistus. Note the jays with their black crowns and white rumps.

Km 44. — On the left, the road to Ajlun.

Km 48. Jarash.

Jarash

In a remote valley, 48 kms from Amman, among the Mountains of Gilead, stand the ruins of Jarash, a city of the Decapolis, and the most complete example of a provincial Roman city in the world.

Rediscovered by the German traveller Seetzen in 1806, since then scholars and visitors have steadily increased.

The city was one time called "Antioch on the Chrysorrhoas" (Golden River), a big name for the little stream that still meanders through its centre, lined with walnut and poplar trees. This may mean that it was one of the Seleucid kings, probably Antiochus IV (175-163 B.C.), who made the original village into a great centre, for part of the site was occupied from Neolithic times, c. 6000 B.C. Inscriptions found in the ruins also attribute the founding to Alexander the Great. It could

also have been Ptolemy II (285-246 B.C.) who turned Amman into the Hellenistic city of Philadelphia. Josephus has the first historical reference: Theodorus of Philadelphia fled there to hide his treasure in the Temple of Zeus. Soon after, Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.) took it. After the conquest by Pompey in 63 B.C. it joined the Decapolis.

Of the Hellenistic period there are no remains to be seen, but traces of it have been found. We have the texts and the reference to the Temple of Zeus.

The arrival of Rome, and the Pax Romana, was the beginning of a new era and till the end of its life all dates are given in the Pompeian era. Commerce and agriculture grew and people had the ease and wealth of peace to devote themselves to the arts. There was a flourishing trade with the Nabataeans during the first centuries B.C.-A.D. Nabataean influence played a part in the architecture and Dushares, the "Arabian god", was honoured there.

The wealth of the city was derived mainly from agriculture, although the iron mines in the Ajlun hills may have played a part. The city wall, still visible in great part, was of light construction, just sufficient to hold off the desert marauders who were the standing menace to settled life.

About the middle of the first century A.D., Jarash, having become wealthy, began a mighty building programme, including the Street of Columns (Cardo Maximus) and the two streets crossing it at the North and South Tetrapylons. The Northwest Gate was completed in 75-76. The Temple of Zeus begun in 22 A.D. was still under construction in 70. The South Theatre was being built at the same time, and the older Temple of Artemis was beautified then. In 90 A.D. it was absorbed in to the new Roman Province of Arabia.

In the second century its trade increased after the Emperor Trajan annexed the Nabataean Kingdom (106 A.D.) and built new

roads throughout the provinces. Many large buildings were pulled down to make way for more elaborate structures. The two huge *thermae* or baths were built then. These baths, without which no Roman city was complete, were more of a club for gay parties. The North Gate was rebuilt in 115 A.D. and remodelled to meet Trajan's road. The Emperor Hadrian visited the city in 129-30. The Triumphal Arch was raised to celebrate his visit. This was the golden age of Jarash and there was a great outburst of building activity. Most of the great structures we see today were raised then. The main street was widened from the Forum to the Artemis temple, the Ionic columns were replaced by bigger and better Corinthian models. Marble was brought from Asia Minor and granite from Aswan. Most of the stone was hewn in local quarries and no doubt the majority of the workers were local though under Roman supervision. The Temple of Artemis was rebuilt and dedicated in 150. The Temple of Zeus was rebuilt again and dedicated about 163; the Nymphaeum in 191; a temple of Nemesis (now vanished) was erected outside the north gate, and farther up the valley a temple to Zeus Epicarpus. Inscriptions speak of shrines to Zeus Helios Serapis, Zeus Poseidon, Isis, Apollo and Diana. Mention is made of the 3rd Cyrenaica and the 10th Gemina Legions.

The spring within the town, Ain Qarawan, was supplemented from another spring, Birkitian, a km to the north.

The peak was reached in the third century, when Jarash was promoted to the rank of a colony. After a few decades the decline set in. The destruction of Palmyra (273) and the growth of the Sassanide Kingdom shifted trade routes and Jarash immediately felt the effect. Although Diocletian's defeat of the Sasanides (300 A.D.) gave it a new lease of life, it is clear from the buildings, especially from the reuse of inscribed blocks, that the decline set in.

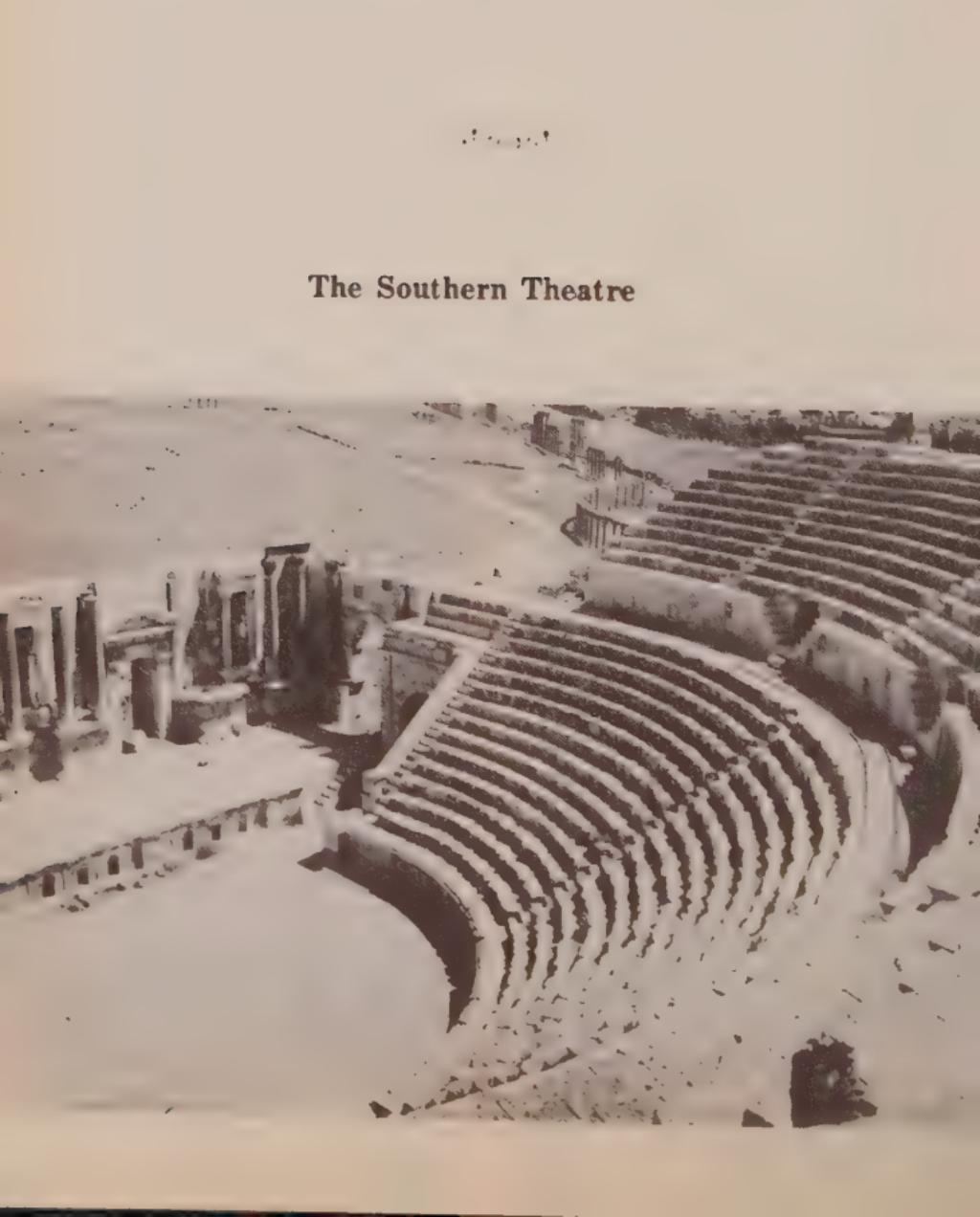


Jerash





The temple of Artemis



The Southern Theatre



The Church of Sts Cosma and Damianos

The Fountain Court





Jerash

City of the Decapolis

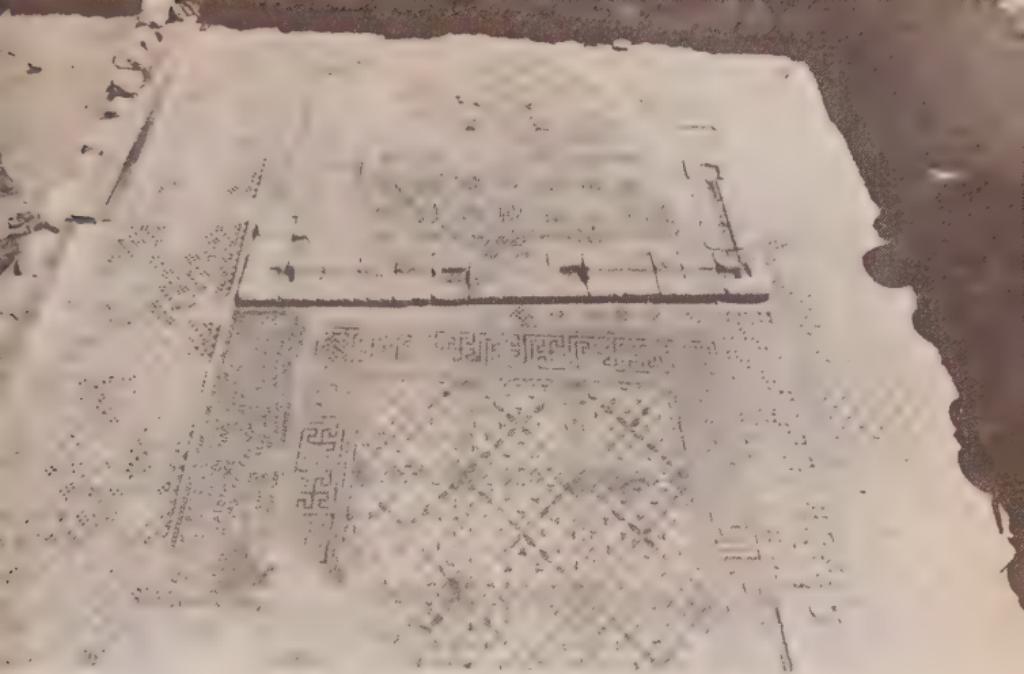




Qasr er-Rabad

Um Qeis

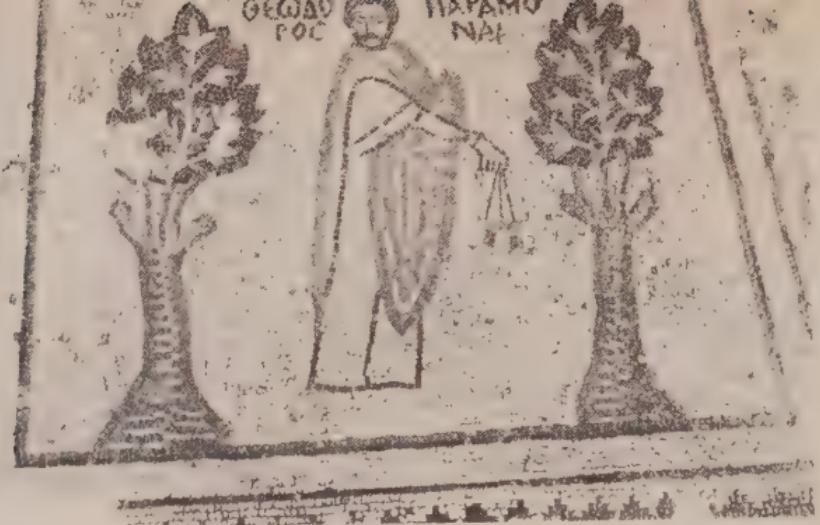




Rihab, Church of St Mena

Beit er-Ras-Capitolias: Achilles killing Hector





Mosaics from the Church of Sts Cosma and Damianos
in Jerash

Christian Jarash

In 350, Christianity gained a foothold in the city. Bishop Exeresius of Jarash was at the council of Seleucia in 359 A.D.: Bishop Placcus was at the council of Chalcedon in 451. We have the names of other bishops: Marianus (5-6 cent.); Claudius (464); Eneas 495; Paul (531); Anastasius (6 cent.); Genesius (611). Between 400-600 A.D. no less than 13 known churches were built; and inscriptions would point to some others. The Cathedral was erected in the 4th cent., but in the 6th cent. 9 churches were built, 7 of them under Justinian (527-565). It would appear that at this period the majority of the citizens were Christian, and that the Jews were expelled about 531 (see Bagatti, *Gerasa Cristiana*, in TS. Mar. 1959). Unfortunately, as elsewhere, all these churches were built by the wholesale destruction of pagan shrines.

The beautiful courtyard of the Artemis Temple was desecrated by the building there of a potters' quarter with their kilns.

Under Justinian there was a rise in prosperity and the pagan festival of Maiumas was revived in 535. From the excavations one can get a good idea of the life at the time. Appearances counted most. There was plenty of cheap luxury; ornaments were glass imitations or gilded bronze: mosaics were of glass. Next door to St. Theodore's were baths; the clergy had fine quarters. But the constructions, even the churches, were poor. The last church was built by Bishop Genesius in 641, by which time the effect of the Persian invasion (and occupation 611-614) was being felt. Indeed it could be said to mark the beginning of the end of Jarash. The only remains of this invasion are the socketed stones to hold goal-posts in the Hippodrome. This was turned into a polo field. The Moslem conquest about 635 completed the decline of the city. Yet it sank gradually, for some of the churches were still in use in 720, when the Caliph Yazid II ordered that "all images

and likenesses in his dominions, of bronze and of wood and of stone and pigments should be destroyed". This resulted in the destruction of most of the mosaic floors in the churches. A series of earth-quakes, especially that of 747, helped to complete the destruction of the city.

After that, the history of Jarash is lean. Parts of it were still occupied in the late 8th cent. William of Tyre, at the time of the Crusades, says that it was for long totally uninhabited. The Atabey of Damascus converted the Temple of Artemis into a fortress, which was destroyed by Baldwin II (1118-31). Yagut, a 13 cent. Arab traveller, says that the place was a field of ruins, completely uninhabited.

So it sank into happy oblivion: until the Turkish government in 1878, established a Circassian colony on the east bank of the river. Expert in handling large stones, the Turks rapidly helped to destroy what was left. Schumacher records seeing, in 1891, the Circassians using gunpowder to blow down the columns on the main street to get the drum they needed! Since 1925 they have helped to repair it.

Abandoned for a thousand years, Jarash had escaped rebuilding. Roman engineers re-erected it with such solidity that large portions of its structures have withstood the frequent earth-quakes that shake the mountain on which it stands. The rains of many winters have washed down upon it the soil of the hills; the summer winds have brought the desert sands: red anemones and poppies, pink hollyhocks and in spring wan asphodels spread a gay mantle over all. It is a remarkable monument to the colonizing ability of ancient Graeco-Roman civilization.

Excavation

Work began in 1925 under Garstang and Horsfield for the Dept. of Antiquities, and later Crowfoot of the British School and Yale

University worked on it. In 1930-35 an all-American team, Yale and the American School of Oriental Research worked on the site. The results were published in part in the volume *Gerasa* in 1938 by Prof. Kraeling. In fact Jarash was the H.Q. of the Dept. of Antiquities in Jordan until 1939. Since 1948 the Dept. of Antiquities has done considerable work. In 1953 good work was done on the South Theatre. In 1937 mosaics in Sts Cosmas and Damianos were relaid, and the cardo between Forum and South Tetrapylon was cleared.

Visits

The first monument we meet is the *Triumphal Arch*, of 129 A.D., a triple gateway which is still standing to about half its original height: it stands in line with the principal entrance, the South Gate. Between a hollow, west of the road, and the South Gate lies the *Hippodrome* (Cfr. the plain, 1). It originally had tiers of seats on 3 sides.

The city walls are still visible in part. The South Gate (2) is much damaged and partly excavated.

From the South Gate we pass into the *Forum*, which is peculiar in shape, probably influenced by the approach to the Temple of Zeus: a great flight of steps once led from the Forum to this Temple. The square podium was probably a base for a statue.

The outer part is paved with large blocks of limestone, like those of the main street, while the centre is paved with smaller and softer stone. The capitals of the columns, 56 of which still stand, are of the Ionic order, whereas those of the main street are Corinthian.

From the Forum a path leads to the *South Theatre* (4), erected in the 1st cent. in the Corinthian order. It was in great part reconstructed in 1953 by Diana Kirkbride and the late Theo. Canaan. There were 32 tiers of steps, accommodating 4000-5000 spectators. The lower tiers are numbered and presumably

could be reserved.

Adjoining the Theatre is the *Temple of Zeus* (3), built about 163 A.D. A remarkable feature are the huge vaults constructed to raise the level of the courtyard: some of them are now used as stores.

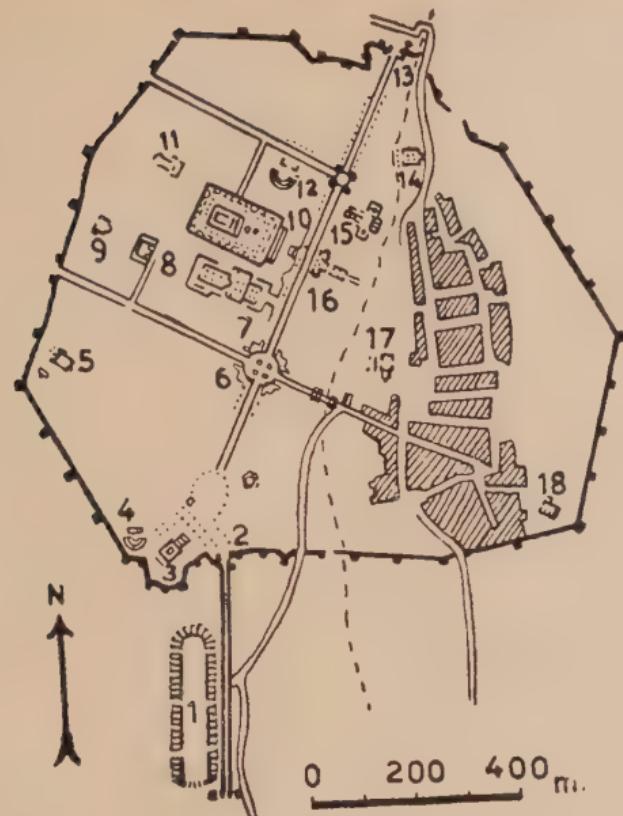
Beyond the Forum begins the *Street of the Columns*, the *Cardo Maximus*, which runs from the Forum to the North Gate, 600 metres long, and flanked by 260 columns on either side. The original street was laid out between 39 and 76 A.D. in the Ionic Order: later part of it was rebuilt in the Corinthian order. The street still retains its original paving stones, with the ruts made by the chariot wheels. The raised sidewalk was covered so that the Gerasenes could window-shop for miles in all weather. The *cloaca maxima* with its manholes can still be traced. All the principal public buildings of the city had their entrance from it.

Crossing the street at right angles were two other streets. At each of the crossroads there was a monument, a *Tetrapylon*. The first, the *South* (6) stands 200 metres north of the Forum; the second, the *North*, 350 metres farther north. It consists of 4 square piers each supporting 4 columns, on top of which was a stepped pyramid, probably surmounted by a statue. The cross street runs west to a gate in the city wall, and east to a bridge which spanned the valley.

A new *Street of the Columns* now stands here. Corinthian columns excavated and assembled in situ recently, give some idea of the street.

Bypassing for the moment the stairway leading to the Cathedral, we follow the main street, flanked with shops, till we reach the *Nymphaeum*, completed in 191 A.D. Which was an ornamental fountain and a shrine of the Nymphs. It is of two storeys, and the carving is most ornate.

Immediately after the Nymphaeum stand the ruins of the *Temple of Artemis* (10) and



Jarash.

1. Hippodrome.	10. Temple of Artemis.
2. South Gate.	11. Synagogue Church.
3. Zeus Temple.	12. North Theatre.
4. South Theatre.	13. North Gate.
5. Church of SS. Peter & Paul.	14. Church of the Apostles, Prophets & Martyrs.
6. South Tetravylon.	15. West Baths.
7. Cathedral.	16. Viaduct Church.
8. Church of St. Theodore.	17. East Baths.
9. Churches of Sts Cosmas & Damianos, St John, and St George.	18. Procopius Church.

its Propylaea or Gate. This is the most imposing monument in Jarash: Artemis was the patron goddess of the city. The whole dates to the middle of the 2nd cent., the Propylea being completed in 150.

The plan began on the eastern side of the stream, where a roadway crossed the valley to

a bridge. This is no longer there. The road, across which the Viaduct Church stands today, led to the main street and passed through the Great Gate. The route continued by means of a flight of steps to a platform and met the façade of the structure enclosing the temple courtyard. Another flight of steps led to the portico surrounding the courtyard, from which the temple was reached by another flight of steps. The courtyard rested on vaults — one of them now used as a museum. Only the mighty columns of the portico are now standing. The cella was also raised on vaults and was reached by 4 steps. The entrance is now blocked. The statue of the goddess was on a raised platform under arches at the west end. Only priests were ever allowed into the cella, the worshippers remaining outside in the courtyard.

The temple itself was the centre feature of a grand plan of courtyards, monumental gates and stairways. The Byzantines built hovels and kilns in the courtyard and carried off stones to build their churches. In the 12th cent. the Arabs turned the temple into a fort, which the Crusaders destroyed, causing much damage. Access to the interior of the cella is through a little door in the south face. Despite earthquakes, Time and Man, the temple still stands majestically with its massive but beautiful columns. From the Temple you can get a good view of the city wall, which is 4 km long and encloses 525 hectares, of whose less than half are covered by the modern village.

Beyond the Artemis Propylea the street narrows and the Ionic order appears again. You reach the *Northern Tetravylon*, different in plan from the Southern one. This had 4 piers joined by arches, surmounted by a dome, almost similar to the nearby baths. It was dedicated to Julia Domna, the Syrian wife of the Emperor Septimius Severus (193-211).

The *North Gate* (13), as now seen, was built in 115 A.D. under Claudius Severus, a legate of Trajan, who rebuilt the road from Pella to Jarash.

One km up the valley from the North Gate is *Birkitain* (two cisterns), the spring that supplied part of the city with water. Beside it is a small theatre. Here the Maiumas Water Festival was held, resumed in the sixth century, although opposed by the Christians, as it involved among other things, mixed bathing. There was originally a colonnade around the pool. The pools have been repaired of late.

At the north *Tetrapylon* by the North Gate, a street runs west, rising out of the field and flanked by columns. A path leads to a Square in the Corinthian order, with fine columns and huge architraves.

Adjoining this is the *North Theatre* (12). No excavations have been carried out here.

After the North Tetrapylon a footpath leads to the *West Baths* (15), constructed some time in the 2nd cent., and containing an early example of a dome on pendentives, namely, a circular dome on a square room. There were originally three such domes.

Churches

There are the remains of 13 churches; perhaps some more yet to be uncovered. With the exception of the Cathedral they are closely dated, and as there has been no restoration since they were abandoned in the 8th or 9th cent., they are good material for the study of early Christian architecture. Most of the inner walls were cased in marble, coloured slabs, painted plaster and sometimes glass mosaics. The buildings themselves were of poor quality.

Probably the earliest Christian building is the *Cathedral* (350-375) (7). A beautiful staircase leads up to it beside the Nymphaeum. The little shrine at the head of the staircase is dedicated to the Virgin and the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. The plan is of the usual basilica type, a nave with north and south aisles and an apse, in which stood the altar, a chancel enclosed by a marble screen and a pulpit at the SW corner of the chancel. Al-

most every stone was taken from earlier structures, with the Temple of Dionysius contributing largely. In a trench in the middle of the nave can be seen a section of the podium on which the temple stood. The line of columns across the church at this point shows the size to which it was reduced when rebuilt probably after an earthquake.

To the West is the *Fountain Court*. This was originally a square court, but when St. Theodore's was built, its apse and east wall jutted into the court, and the western side and half the north and south sides of the colonnade were removed. The fountain remained, and also the Bishop's throne. The water for the so called miracle of Cana, was brought in lead pipes.

Epiphanius tells us that there was a fountain at Gerasa at which was enacted yearly the miracle of the changing of water into wine. This was on Jan. 6. Dionysius was the Greek god of luxuriant fertility, especially as displayed by the wine, and therefore the god of the vine. The wine episode was no doubt the baptizing of the pagan festival by a growing Christianity.

Two flights of stairs on the west lead to the *Church of St. Theodore* (8), built between 494 and 496 A.D. A little of the pavement remains: at the SW is the baptistry and on SE a small chapel with mosaic floor. The atrium had a colonnade on 3 sides.

A passage on the northeast and through a gap in its north wall can be seen part of the heating apparatus for the adjoining Baths built by Bishop Placcus in 454-5 A.D., and restored in 584. The entrance to the baths is on the street running up by the side of the Artemis courtyard.

A short distance to the west of St. Theodore's are the 3 churches: *St John* in the centre, *St George* to the south, *Sts Cosmas and Damianos* to the north (9). They were all erected between 529 and 533, the last by Theo-

dore and his wife Georgia, whose portraits on the mosaic pavement can still be seen. This mosaic was lifted, repaired and relaid in a firm bed in 1937-38. The 3 churches open on to a common atrium. At the east end of the churches was originally a chapel and later a baptistry.

There are other churches of less interest on the west side of the city. Immediately west of the three churches is that of *Genesius*, which has the latest date so far found, Sept. 611. Of no particular interest, it is not completely excavated. South of St. John's is the *Church of Sts Peter and Paul* (5), built about 540. A little further south is a Mortuary Church. An arch opens into a cave, used as a family vault. West of the Artemis Temple is the *Synagogue Church* (11), so called because set into a synagogue in 530. This involved a reversal of the plan, as a synagogue east of the Jordan is oriented to the west, whereas a church is oriented east. Buried are some good mosaics and an inscription in Hebrew.

Returning to the Propylea of the Temple of Artemis, we have to the east the *Viaduct Church* (16), mentioned above.

The approach road to the Temple was spanned at this point by a triple gate, which was turned into a church, the only classical building that was adopted to Christian use. The voussoirs, or arch stones, were used to form the apse, and can be seen lying where they fell. It was built in 565 A.D. In the original plan the nave was the paved street, with a row of columns on either side. Then came a courtyard, which became the atrium of the church.

Leaving by the North Gate and turning right, you meet the church of the *Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs* (14), but as the road runs over it, there is little to be seen. Below it is the village spring, *Ain Karawan*.

Continuing through the town, near the Mosque you come upon the *East Baths* (17) in a ruinous state, and partly used for animals.

Above the village to the southeast are the ruins of a church built in 526-7 by an officer named *Procopius* (18). It contained some of the finest mosaics found in Jarash, but they were badly mutilated and remain buried.

Jarash is the centre of a Liwa. There is a Melkite Parish and an Orthodox Parish, and some Protestants.

From Jarash to Ajlun

Km 44 — A road leads off on the left from the road to Jarash, through a very pleasant countryside to Ajlun, passing through the villages of *El Kitta*, *Reimun*, and *Sakib*.

Shortly afterwards a beautiful view opens up below you, with Qal'at er Rabad at its west. Going down rapidly you reach the village of *Anjara* which has a Latin Parish (1890) and an Orthodox church on the higher part of the village. A new Latin Church was erected in 1954. The Rosary Sisters (1956) have a school.

A road running through *Anjara* leads to the large town of *Kufrinja*. This town was originally *Kufr Franji* (Franks' town), because the prisoners taken by the castle above it were settled in this beautiful valley. Some houses in the town show beautiful ancient Arab inscriptions. If any trace of European blood can be seen in the inhabitants, then it is more apparent in the women.

The German Evangelical Institute carried out in 1961 a surface survey of Wadi Kufrinja. The result is published *ADAJ VI* (1962). Worthy of note is *Khirbet Hamid* (*Arbua*) north of the road from *Sakib* to *Anjara*, with remains of the Iron, Roman and Byzantine periods: also *Anjara* with the same. The road continues on the south side of the Wadi Kufrinji to reach the Ghor at *Kureiyima*.

After this the road runs on to Ajlun, leaving on the right, in a beautiful wooded position, the American Hospital of the Southern Baptist Church, taken over in 1952 from an independent British Mission. It gives medical care to some 50 villages.

Ajlun

Km 73 — Stop at the mosque with its imposing square minaret, built in 13-14th cent. on the site of a Christian Church. In the courtyard are some remains of the church and some stones with beautiful Arab inscriptions.

The town's Moslems live in the lower part around the mosque and the Weli of Mohammed el Ba'ag. The Christians live in the upper part, having built a Greek Orthodox church in 1885 and a Latin one in 1929 to replace that of 1889. The Rosary Sisters (1922) have a school and the Baptists have a college for boys and one for girls.

The Christians, belonging to three tribes, came mainly from Karak about 200 years ago. Ajlun itself may have got its name from Eglon, the fat king of Eglon.

The present town of Ajlun seems to have existed at the same time as the castle, for Dimishqi in 1300 found there "fruits of all kinds and provisions in plenty". Ibn Batuta in 1355 says: "a fine town with good markets and a strong castle; a stream runs through the town and its waters are sweet and good". Today the town is the centre of a Qadha.

Qal'at er Rabad

Whenever you are in this area and long before you get to Ajlun your attention is drawn to the fortress on the peak above the town of Ajlun and to that above Anjara and Kufrinja. This is Qal'at er Rabad, the Castle with the Suburbs, as it is usually translated. The castle was surrounded by villages on the east, north and west, as can clearly be seen from the ruins amid which there are plenty of Arab pottery shards. The area was well supplied with water as can be seen from the many cisterns inside and outside the building. It is possible, however, that the castle got its name from the tribe Rabadiyeh, who today still own that land. You can reach it by car through Ajlun.

The Castle was built by Izzidin Usama, a cousin and governor of Saladin in 1184-85. Its chief purpose was to check the expansion of the Latin Kingdom in Transjordan. The mountain on which it stands is called Jebel Auf from a clan of that name. It is believed that an ancient monastery once stood on the site inhabited by a Christian named Ajlun. The castle was built on the ruins of the monastery. The plan of the original castle, now the western part, was roughly square with a tower at each corner. It is one of the few examples of Saracenic military architecture. It was enlarged in 1214-15 by Aybak ibn Abdallah, *mamluk* and *majordomo* of the Caliph El Malik El Muazzam. The baileys were added on the east and south with two more towers: a new tower was added on the southeast.

The castle is entered by climbing on the northeastern side: a pillar of rock left in the moat was probably a rest for a drawbridge. It had many cisterns, and in time a village grew up around the castle. The ruins of it are still visible on the slope.

The older buildings are distinguished by the roughness of the masonry and the narrow windowslits. Built into the walls are carved blocks, one with a cross which may be a proof that it was originally a monastery site.

With the fall of Karak (1188) the castle became the governor's headquarters. In 1260 it was occupied by the Mongols, but were ejected the same year. In Mamluk times it was one of a series of stations by which messages could be sent by fire-beacon and pigeon within twelve hours by day or by night between Baghdad and Cairo. Nothing much is known of it later except that in the 17th cent. some crude repairs were carried out. In fact Fakhr ed-Din and Ibrahim Pasha both carried out repairs. Burckhardt visited it in 1812 and it was inhabited by some 40 persons of the Barakat family. The earthquake of 1837 seriously damaged it. A partial survey was made of the site by Mr. C.N. Johns in 1929, and some ur-

gent repairs were carried out by the Dept. of Antiquities (see *QDAP* I, 1932, pp. 21-33, with plates; Mc Cawn, *Ladder of Progress in Palestine*, 338-9).

The view from the top of the ruins is so wonderful that a better can hardly be imagined. On a clear day you can see the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee, and about you is the lovely land of Gilead with so many biblical memories: to the west is the Jordan valley and beyond the mountains of Samaria and Judea.

About 10 minutes down the slope on the west side is a shrine of *El Khadr*, probably a medieval house now used for the popular cult of St. Elijah, who, with St. George, shares the name and the shrines *El Khadr* (the green or living).

Ajlun Area

Ain Janna is a large suburb 1 km north of Ajlun. It has gardens rich from the springs of 'Ain el Musrab and Ain Fawar. There is nothing left of the ancient Roman town except tombs.

Gilead was, as we know from the Bible, a wooded land. Not far from Ajlun was the forest of Ephraim, where Absalom was slain while hanging from a thick and large tree by his hair. The English Bible calls the tree "Oak", but "*elah*" is not oak but *pistacia*, often found with oaks. It has clusters of small red berries and emits a distinctive fragrance.

In 1880 according to travellers the Ajlun area was still a great wood. Between 1880-1897 two thirds of the trees disappeared¹. Today the Government is making a big effort to conserve the remainder and replant some areas.

¹ According to Goodrich-Frear, "*In a Syrian Saddle*", the newly arrived Circassians were more responsible for this than anybody else.

Ajlun to Deir Abu Said

Following the metalled road from Ajlun to Irbid, after 5 kms a signboard shows a road on the left to Deir Abu Said. Taking this track through a densely forested area and you can relive the tragic story of Absalom's death. After about 2 km the road forks left to Fara, and right, up an incline over-looking the *Wadi el Ba'un* which runs down into the *Wadi el Yabis*. Near the road is the small village of *Ishtafeina*; below it in the valley, *Mihna*; higher up *Et Tiyarra*; and still higher up *Um el Manabi*. Nearby along the track itself is *Um el Hadamus*, consisting of only a few houses. All five villages have in recent years been re-founded by the inhabitants of 'Ain Janna.

Four of the villages have evidence of earlier occupation and *Mihna* has a history all its own.

Um el Hadamus, shows remains of ancient buildings, now partially visible: pottery sherds of the Byzantine and Roman periods lie around.

Um el Manabi, a small village, shows the remains of a church and monastery, the mosaics of which are to be seen inside and outside the houses.

Et Tiyarra, a slightly bigger village, has many ancient tombs, and cubes of mosaics and Byzantine pottery abound.

Mihna, occupies the site of the ancient town and so it is more difficult to see the remains. Outside the village in *Wadi Mihna* is 'Ain *Mihna*.

To the west of the village is a group of fine holm oaks (*sindyan*), it is called the *Weli* of Sheikh Mohammed El Mahnawi, and by some the "trees of Absalom", but this name is suspect, and rightly so, having been taken from visitors, who always find what they seek in such matters.

Mihna (Mahanaim = two camps)

First of all, Mahanaim has been placed in so many sites by so many authors that one can hardly venture an opinion.

Regarding the site of Mahanaim we know from the Bible:

1. It was north of the Yabbok (Zerka) Gn 32,3).
2. On the confines of the territories of Gad and Manasses (Js 13,8,29).
3. It was a city assigned to the Levites (Js 21,38; 1 Ch 6,65).
4. Where Isboseth, Saul's son, fled (2 Samuel 2,8).
5. Where David fled on the revolt of Absalom (2 Samuel 17,24).
6. In Solomon's time it was the centre of a district (1 Kings 4,14).

Some who consider Mihna as Mahanaim would have Fara as Ephraim, which would have given its name to the forest around (e. g. Heidet, *Das heilige Land*, 41-1897, 183). Others would have the forest between Rasun and Afana, and perhaps the name Ephraim is retained in Khallet el Jafr (e.g. Abel, *Géor.* 41 -1897, 183). Other sites proposed are: Tulul Edh Dahab, Qal'at Er Rabad, Ajlun, Kufrinja, Kh. Slekhhat, Tell el Emrameh. Despite all this diversity of opinion, Mihna is still the most probable site.

The road now continues downhill until, following the old Roman road from Maqlub to 'Ain Janna, we reach the village of Ba'un, a Moslem area. The new mosque was built on a very ancient site of the materials of an earlier building. A track leads from Ba'un to Ausara, which has a cave called El Kenise, and crosses and mosaics can be seen in the village.

From Ba'un a very rough track leads over the hill, to the north, to the village of Irijan, which is really two villages, one Moslem, and one Greek Catholic. It is a pleasant village

with a good water supply. Pottery, mainly Arabic, but also Byzantine lies about. Irjan may be identifiable with Argob of the Bible (D 3, 4-13). But Argob is a district rather than a town, and if correctly translated means *Stony*, which hardly suits the facts.

Shortly after, the road crosses the Wadi El Yabis, and on its way to Deir Abu Sa'id passes near to *Judeita*, *Kufr Abil*, *Kufr Awan*, *Beit Idis*, *Kufr Rakib* and *Khanzire*. *Maqlub*, identified with Abel Meholah is on the north side of the Wadi el Yabis, and on the last of the slopes of the plateau of *Kufr Abil*.

Deir Abu Sa'id is the administrative centre of a big area with many small villages known as the *Kura*. The *Kura* people, who had often wiped out whole Turkish detachments, proved very difficult to the Administration in 1920 and in fact the young Arab Legion had "18 men killed, many wounded, practically all its horses, and the remainder of the force broke up and fled" (*Arab Command*, p. 75). There are Roman and Byzantine remains.

In May 1921 the *Kura* district was the scene of serious disturbance under Kulaib al Shuraidi.

Road to Fara

This road brings you past *Deir es Sumadiya*, *Khirbet Et Wahadina* and *Fara* to *Halawa*. villages in the hills above the *Ghor*.

Khirbet el Wahadina is a village with a mixed population of Moselms Greek Orthodox and Latins. The Christians came about 200 years ago from Karak. Three brothers came. Ibrahim and Jacub settled in Ajlun, but Bader who was a shoe-maker settled in what the Christians usually call *El Khirbe* (the ruins). The whole village shows signs of having used ancient Christian materials in their houses.

There is a Latin Parish (1937), with a new Church built in 1963 in honour of St Elias, because Wadi Yabis is near. A road since 1962 connects it with Ajlun.

Fara has many stones with crosses. *Hala-wa* is at the end of the line.

Mar Elyas and Listib

Between the two tracks mentioned above, Ajlun-Fara and Ajlun-Ba'un lies Khirbet Mar Elyas and Listib, best reached by a track from Ishtafeina.

Khirbet Mar Elyas is on a hill of 900 m. On the summit are the ruins of a church of the Byzantine period. It has not been cleared. The hill is the property of the Orthodox Christians of Ajlun, who have also on the west slope a small stone enclosure for prayers.

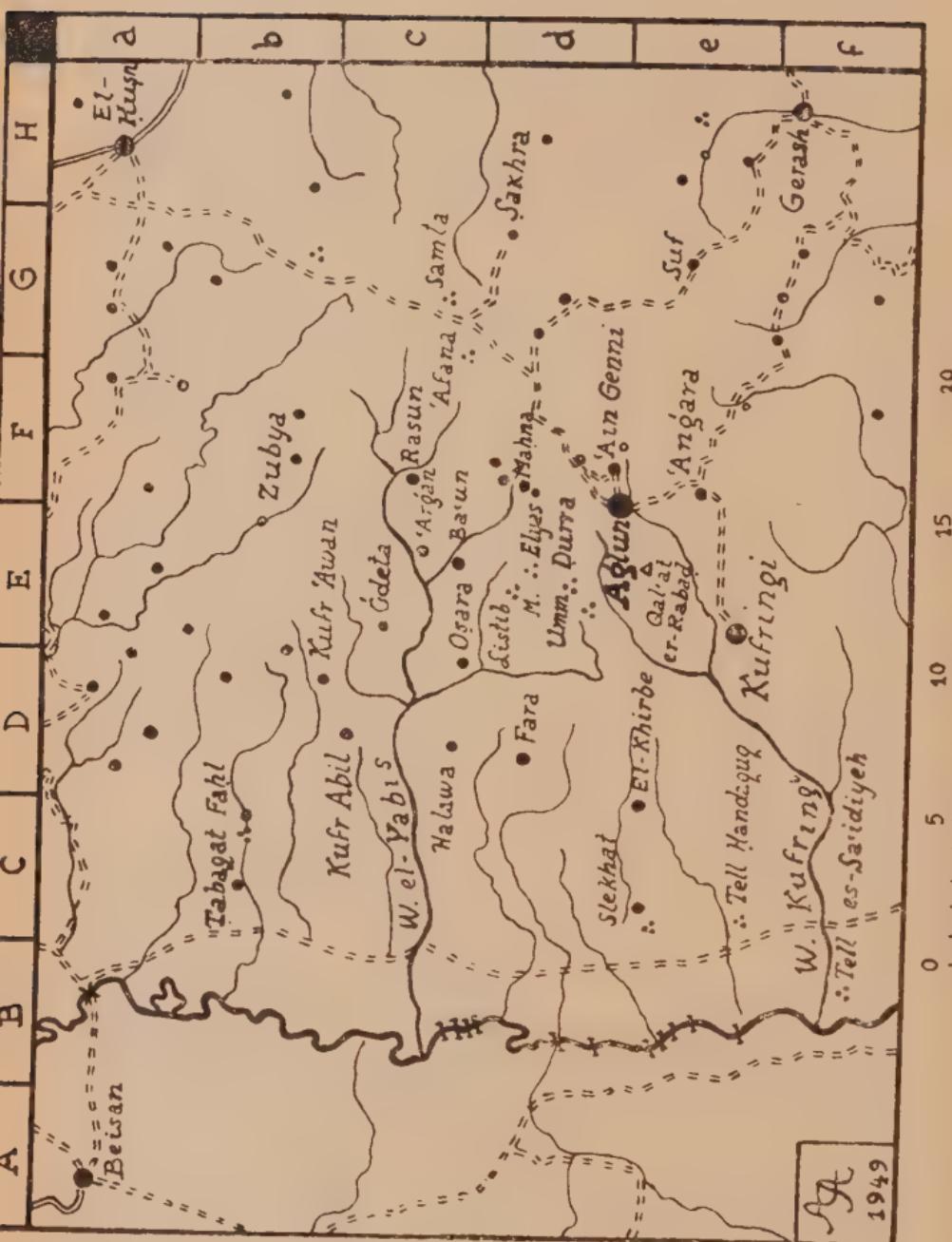
One km northwest of Mar Elyas is Listib, a smaller hill, 802 m, with a ruined mosque on the south-west side of the ruins. The walls of the ruins are certainly Byzantine, but the pottery shards are Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Arabic. The building material of the mosque was taken from the ruins, but it was not, it seems, originally a church, as some believed.

Listib, according to most scholars, is the birthplace of the great prophet Elijah (Elias).

In 1 Kings 17,1 he is called a Tishbite. The original Tishbe has become Listib. And in this area also is to be sought the Brook Cherith where Elijah took refuge. All agree in placing it in the upper reaches of Wadi el Yabis, possibly someplace between Irjan and Maqlub.

"And going, ...he dwelt by the torrent Cherith, which is over against the Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the evening: and he drank of the torrent. But after some time the torrent was dried up, for it had not rained upon the earth" (1 Kings 17, 5-8).

A good metalled road leads from Ajlun to Irbid ($3\frac{1}{2}$ kms). After 6 kms a road goes back, on the right, leading to Jarash (14 kms) and entering it from the north. The road passes through 'Ibbin, 'Ibillin, Suf and Deir el Liyat.



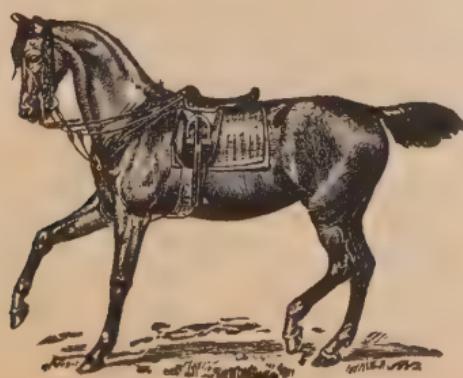
The Ajlun area.

For detailed information on Ajlun and environs see *LA II* (1952), *Escursioni nei dintorni di Aglun* by Augustinović and Bagatti.

Jarash to Mafrak (39.5 kms)

A secondary road leads east from Jarash to Mafrak through less pleasant country. Passing through *Madwar* with Roman and Byzantine remains, by *Hamama*, we reach *Rihab* of Bene Hasan with important Christian remains. In the 1940's the first four churches were found: St. Sofia, completed in February 604 A.D., St. Basil, built in the year 594 A.D., St. Stephan in 620 A.D., and St. Isaiah the Prophet in 634 A.D. Another church, dedicated to St. Menas and built in the same year as the precedent was excavated in 1958. In 1970 the church of St. Paul, built in 595 A.D. was excavated. Recently two more churches were excavated by the Department of Antiquities under the direction of Fr. Michele Piccirillo of the Franciscan Biblical Institute: St. Peter built in 623 A.D. and St. Mary built in 533 and renovated in 582 A.D. All the churches were built while the Archbishoprics of Bostra, Polleuctos and Theodore, the main town of the region to whose territory Rihab was part, were still extant.

An inscription in the church of St. Mary says: "Lord God of St. Mary and of all the saints have mercy on all the world".



Amman to Mafraq (72 kms)

Leaving the city by the northeast you have to your left *Qasr Raghdan*, (the King's Palace), and higher up the Tomb of King Abdallah. Having crossed the railway you leave to the right the *Aerodrome*. While making the runway in 1955, there was found a small temple, containing imported Mycenaean and Cypriot pottery and Egyptian stone vases, typical of the period 1600 to 1300 B.C.

Km 14. — *Ruseifa*. Next to a beautiful green valley there is the most important export of Jordan, Phosphates. Production in 1973 was 1.523.888 tonnes.

Kms. 23 — *Zarqa*. Is the administrative centre of the Liwa of Zarqa.

Before entering the town is Zarqa spring and the beginning of Wadi el Zarqa (Blue Valley). Above the spring are the ruins of a small Arab Fort, *Qasr Shibib*, built over a Roman fort. It will be noticed that this bears the same name as *Khat Shibib*, the defence line that runs east of Sadaqa and west of Ma'an. The Khat Shibib, a stone wall, was built in the 10th cent. A.D. to mark the boundary between the desert and the sown. Zarqa was formerly only a small village of Caucasians but its growth from 1920 on, and especially since 1948, has been phenomenal. Beside being the headquarters of the Arab Legion there are several small factories, tannery, boundary and 2 breweries. Since 1962 it has an oil refinery, to the north of the town.

Zerqa has two Latin Parishes: St. Pius X (1950) and Regina Apostolorum (1956). There are 2 Boys' Schools and 2 Girls' Schools, run by Rosary Sisters (1949) and by the Sisters of St. Dorothy (1966). The Melkites have two parishes, run by Salvatorian Fathers, and two schools: there are Salvatorian Sisters. The Auxiliaries (*Auxiliaires Féminines Internationales*

Catholique AFI) do social work, and depend on the Melkites. The Greek Orthodox have a parish church and school. The Anglicans have a school and an important centre for the resettlement of the refugees. The Church of the Nazarenes has a church and school. The Assemblies of God have a church and school originated in the Anglican.

There is also a National Protestant church.

From Zarqa there is a road to *Es Sukhna* which is just north of the Wadi Zarqa. It has Roman remains. There are many interesting archaeological sites on either side of the Wadi. To the north are *Kh. el Batrawi* (Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine), *En Nimra* (the same), *Ras Wad'a* (the same); on the south are *Kh. Abu Baifan* (Roman), *Er Ruheil* (Byzantine), *Kh. Jāmūs* (Byzantine), *Kh. el Bira* (Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine).

Km 28-29. — *Kh. Khaw*, with Byzantine ruins on the left. It could have been *Gadda* (on the Roman road from Bosra to Philadelphia) although many think that Gadda is to be identified with *Kh. Es Samra*, farther north on the present railway line and directly on the Roman road.

There is a track from *Es Sukhna* along the railway line to *Kh. es Samra*, which has Byzantine ruins, a church with external apse and some 40 Greek and Syrian inscriptions on tombstones decorated with crosses. The track goes on to *Bal'ama* with Roman and Byzantine remains. The mosque is believed to have been a church.

Km 38. — Track to *Azraq*.

Km. 42-43. — Track to *Qasr el Hallabat*.

Km 72. — *Mafraq* (Crossroads). This was until 1920 only a crossroads, but with the advent of the Iraq Pipe Line it grew into a large town. Within the Irbid District it is

the administrative centre of a Qadha. It has a landing ground. There are the remains of a strong Arab fortress northwest of the Station, a Roman camp, with some Nabataean and Byzantine remains, but on the whole the ruins' origins are difficult to determine.

Until 1928 Mafraq was only a station on the Damascus-Amman line. In 1928 Emir Abdallah gave land there to refugees from Libya. In 1930 the Kirkuk-Haifa Pipe line built an important camp there: and the Company also sank wells. Soon around the camp rose houses built of clay bricks. In 1939-45 it became an important war centre. In 1939 a Latin school was opened and in 1943 it got a Latin Priest. In 1944 a church was built mainly by soldiers from Mauritius. In 1944 the Rosary Sisters opened a school. In 1949 was built a new church, mainly the gift of Miss Rosemary Schmitt of U.S.A. In 1957 a girls' school was completed, and in 1960 a Convent. Also in 1960 with the aid of the Bavarian Section of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre a boys' school and a presbytery were built.

Umm el Jimal (Mother of Camels)

Following the Mafraq-Baghdad road after 8 kms you see away to your left a big dark ruin and a track going off before you get opposite the ruins.

The ruins cover an area of c. 80 ha, and now appear as one great tumbled mass of black basalt, a volcanic lava stone which covers a large area of country to the north and east known as *El Lajah*. This basalt stone is found in various qualities. Its use for making querns is apparent in every ruin on both sides of the Jordan. Here in Umm el Jimal a fairly rough, but easily dressed, it was used for everything, including doors and ceilings. No wood was used in the buildings, as a result of which, many houses still exist with the upper storeys intact. In general the houses follow the usual eastern style of a courtyard with rooms around, and an external stairway leading to the upper storey.

Umm el Jimal seems to have been originally a Nabataean town, founded in the 1st cent. B.C.. It was probably a caravan staging post, and the many open spaces within the town were for the accommodation of the caravans, justifying the name Mother of Camels. There was no spring in the neighbourhood, and the rainwater had to be conserved in cisterns. Outside the walls are many large Nabataean family tombs. Otherwise there are no Nabataean remains, although a small temple inside the South Gate on the west side has been called the *Nabataean Temple*.

Early in the 2nd cent. A.D. the Romans took it over, and it may have been then called *Thantia*, for there was a town of this name in that vicinity. The Emperor Commodus (180-192) built the Northwestern Gate, according to the inscription. Nothing in particular is known about it during the Roman period, but judging from the number of churches (15) it must have been some kind of a religious centre in the Byzantine period. Christianity came early, for the church of Julianus was built in 345, and is the earliest dated church so far known East of the Jordan.

The city was enclosed by a wall, pierced by six gates, two on each of the west, south and east sides. The walls were constructed about 2nd century A.D., and rebuilt in the 4th century. The only monumental gate is on the west side, but one gate on the south side and one on the east side are flanked by towers.

Water Supply. As the city lay in the waterless desert, the collection of rain water was all important, hence the numerous cisterns and reservoirs. The main water supply came from the dam built across the wadi running west of the city. An aqueduct fed a great reservoir in the centre of the city, as well as three other smaller ones.

Buildings. The *Gate of Commodus* (176-180 A.D.). The northern gate of the west side consists of two towers projecting outside the city walls and connected by two arches. An

inscription dates it to the joint reign of Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus. The name Commodus was given to the gate by H.C. Butler who first attempted a detailed plan of Umm el Jimal in 1905.

The Praetorium (dated 371 A.D.), if such it is, lies between the two gates on the west side, in a large open space. It consists of two buildings constructed along the north and west sides of an open court. The northern building is rectangular. The door is in the middle of the south side and opens onto an atrium with 4 columns. The atrium is flanked by two large halls while to the north are 5 rooms. There is evidence of another floor.

The "Barracks" (4th or 5th cent.). Near the middle of the south wall is the large building called "ed Deir", the monastery. The building is rectangular in shape with a chapel of 3 aisles on the east side. Around an open court are single and double rows of rooms. At the southeastern corner is a tower of six storeys. There is a balcony on each side and an inscription in Greek gives the names of the Archangels, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel. If originally built as a barracks, it seems that it later became a monastery, as local tradition claims.

The Churches of Umm el Jimal

Religious architecture was highly developed as witnessed by the 15 churches in the city. They are of two principal types: the hall churches and the basilica churches. The hall type is rectangular or square with arches transversely placed across the axis of the church in the manner of the great Roman Halls of Hauran. The basilica type has a central nave and two aisles, separated by arches which run parallel to the axis of the church.

The Church of Julianos (the oldest, 345 A.D.) is a hall church, between the gate of Commodus and the northwest corner of the city. It consists of ten transverse bays with a semi-circular apse.

The Cathedral (dated 557 A.D.) is a basilica and stands in the middle of the town, between the two gates on the west side.

The West Church, the best preserved church, lies outside the northern gate of the east wall.

The Numerianos Church is situated north of the barracks in the open space.

The Klondianos Church lies opposite the gate of Commodus.

The Double Church, a basilica and a hall, is situated between the two gates on the east side.

The greater part of Umm el Jimal is occupied by the ruins of dwellings. The usual type was an open court on which several rooms opened, and between them ran narrow and crooked lanes. Ordinarily they were of two storeys, but a few were of four.

See an interesting house between the south gate and the southwest corner, where there is a church. It was called the Governorate.

The Tombs

The Nabataean Tomb, a few hundred yards southeast of the city and the Tomb of Sareidos north of the road to the west of the city, are of interest.

You return to the main Mafraq-Baghdad road.

* * *

North of the road to Baghdad, and near the Syrian Frontier are *Subhiya*, *Sabha* and *Umm el Quttein*, all of which with massive ruins, with Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine remains.

According to *Early Churches in Syria* by Butler and Smith (Princeton, 1929) there are the remains of 4 churches and a monastery in Umm el Quttein, and the remains of 3 churches in Sabha.

Around here are extensive flows of black lava from the Jebel Druze area.

It is amazing to see what these men with planning and perseverance could achieve, when

these towns were made to flourish in what is now almost desert. Further along this road near the H. 5, discoveries were made of 700 Safaitic, 100 Kufic and 7 Greek texts at Jawa, Gathum and Tel el Abd. They were either copied or photographed. (Cfr. *An Epigraphical Expedition to North Eastern Transjordan, BASOR* 1933, 1951, 1953. See *Cairn of Hani* in *ADAJ* 2, 1953). Excavations carried out at Jaw have revealed the exact nature of the ruins. There is a lower town and a citadel of the Late Chalcolitic and Early Bronze. It was reoccupied in the Medium Bronze period and later.

In 1944 Glueck examined the ancient ruined sites lying between the I.P.C. pipe line and the Syrian border, e.g. *Ba'eij*, *Sabkhah*, *Sabhiya*, *Dafyaneh*, *Deir el Kalf*, *Umm el Quttein* and *Burya'a*. These are all marked by basalt buildings, similar to those of Umm el Jimal: they were occupied in Roman, Byzantine and medieval Arab times. Each has reservoirs hewn out of the solid rock, and each house had its own cistern. The district had thousands in population once, compared with the few hundred of today. At one time it was under Nabataean domination. It led directly to Jauf, a splendid oasis and a strong Nabataean outpost.

The *Wadi Sirhan* extends from Azraq to within 16 kms of Jauf, is 330 kms long and 30 kms wide. Most of it is in Saudia Arabia. It is not like the ordinary wadi: it is a long shallow depression. The line of the Desert Castles marks the line of the slope of the watershed eastwards. One decends gradually from the *Hamad* to it. It is only a wadi in the sense that it is an extensive catchment basin for rain and run-offs.

It rains infrequently in the Wadi Sirhan and the east desert of Jordan, but at times heavy rain can fall for days. Then water collects and may remain for months in low-lying land. An example is found at Burqa'a or *Qasr el Burqu*, where there are the ruins

of a Roman-Byzantine police-post and caravanserai. It is situated at the very northeastern corner of the country, directly north from H4. Elsewhere this rain water can be seen in several swampy (*sabkhanah*) areas and water holes, Azraq of course being the largest. The pools of Azraq are the focal point of a hydrological system representing a collecting area of 4,800 sq km of desert. Some 37,500 hl of water a day and 13,200 tons of salt a year are concentrated in and around the pools, which vary from fresh water to highly saline. 25 kms SSE of Azraq is 'Amri just within the confines of Jordan. It has plenty of water and one km south of it is the ruin of a very large caravanserai, occupied in Roman and Byzantine times. Here live the Sherâreh Arabs. 150 kms SSE of 'Amri is Meshash Khadraj with water holes and signs of Roman and Byzantine occupation. These sites, right on the fringes of Jordan, are not easily accessible.

* * *

A track from Mafraq runs due north beside the railway line, which brings you to *Sama* with ruins of a monastery of St. George (624 A.D.), and then to *Jabir* (18 kms) with a church and a Greek mosaic inscription. See *LA XIV* 285; and *LA VI* 299-323, where Fr. G. Lombardi ofm. gives a good account of this little village and its hitherto unknown important remains.

The ecclesiastical monuments which exist east of the railway, between the Syrian border and the I.P.C. pipe line, are the best preserved east of the Jordan. They have been carefully studied and the results are available in the publications of the American archaeological expedition to Syria in 1899-1900 and the Princeton University expeditions to Syria in 1904, 1905, 1909.

Mafraq — Dera'a — Irbid

From Mafraq the main road continues in a northwesterly direction to Irbid. After 31 kms you come to another crossroads; right, to Ramtha and Dera'a (21 kms); left to Jarash (kms 45).

Before you reach the above crossroads you see, on the left, a mound, which bears the name *Tell er Rumeith*, which is identified with the ancient Ramoth Gilead, the possession of which was so often disputed by the Kings of Damascus and Israel.

One of Solomon's chief officers, Bengaber, was in Ramoth Gilead, "he was chief in all country of Argob, which is in Bashan, three score great cities with walls and brazen bolts" (1 Kings 4,13). King Ahab (877-854) was mortally wounded there (1 Kings 22,34). And Joram, the son of Ahab was also wounded there when fighting Hazael, King of Syria (2 Kings 8,28-29). The prophet Eliseus sent a disciple to anoint Jehu, King of Israel in Ramath (842-814 B.C.) (2 Kings 9, 1-13). And during the reign of Jehu "King Jazaël ravaged them in all the coasts of Israel. From the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead and Gad and Reuben and Manasseh, from Aroer, which is upon the torrent Arnon, and Gilead and Bashan" (2 Kings 10, 32-33).

Soundings were made here by the American School in 1961-2 and the findings go to substantiate the identification.

After the crossroads, going north, you find Ramtha, which has Roman and Byzantine remains, and also bears the name of ancient Ramoth.

Km 115. — Frontier between Jordan and Syria.

Km 122. — Dera'a: the *Edrei* of Nb 21, 33. Usual frontier formalities. Dera'a-Damascus 106 kms.

Irbid

Continuing the straight road past the Dera'a-Jarash crossroads we reach *Irbid* after 16 kms.

Km 118. — Irbid is the chief town of the Irbid District and the administrative centre.

The Muhamafaza of Irbid takes in the whole northern part of the country and comprises:

- Muhafaza Irbid
- Liwa Jarash
- Qadha Ramtha
- ” Ajlun
- ” Mafraq
- ” Kura
- ” Al Ghor al Shamaliya
- Nahiya Taiyaba
- ” Beni Kinana
- ” Mazar al Shamaliya
- ” Badiya al Shamaliya

Prior to 1948 it was an important centre of transit trade on the route to Haifa port via Tiberias and Nazareth. Despite the loss of this advantage, the city has continued to grow, because it is the administrative centre of the most fertile districts in the country. Lack of water in the past was its main difficulty, but now that has been overcome by pumping water from a spring 18 kms to the northeast.

The city is partly built over a large artificial mound, which covers an earlier Irbid of the Early Bronze Age. The ancient town was surrounded by a wall built of basalt blocks, part of which is still to be seen on the western side of the mound. The Romans built a city here and brought water by conduit from near Ramtha. Irbid is usually identified with the *Beth Arbel* of Hosea 10, 14, and with the Arbela of the Byzantine period, and Arbila of the Decapolis. The rapid growth of the town has removed almost all remains of the past.

In 1884 the Serai was built on the Tell and the town had then only 130 houses and 700 in population. People from Damascus, Nablus, Jews and Christians doubled the pop-

ulation in 10 years. In 1923 it became a Liwa (or Montaqā) with a *Mutassarrif* having *Qaimmaqams* at Ajlun, Jarash, Ramtha, Deir Abu Sa'id (usually called Qaza or sub-districts) and a *mudir* in the Nahiyas of Beni Kinana and Shuni Shamaliya. The ordinance November 11, 1965 brought into being the new division.

The chief towns of the District are Irbid, Mafraq, Jarash, Ajlun, Kufrinjā, Anjara, Nu'eiyima, Taiyiba, Husn, Shuna Shamaliya and Der Abu Sa'id, all of whose have municipalities.

The present town is built of basalt, which does not add to the beauty of the place. Basalt and limestone give a more pleasing variety.

In 1947 the Melkites built a parish Church, which was rebuilt in 1958. They have an elementary school run by the Soarite Brasilian Sisters and a Maternity Hospital (1953) run by the Dames de Nazareth. There is a Latin resident priest since 1950, but only in 1961 the Church was completed, with the aid of the Canadian Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. The Rosary Sisters (1949) have a girls' school and a Maternity Hospital. The Greek Orthodox have a parish and school. The Anglicans, Methodists and Southern Baptists have also centres in the town. According to Yaqut Irbid was the tombs of the mother of Moses and four of the sons of Jacob, Dan, Issachar, Zabulon and Gad. Toukan makes the same claim (cfr *The Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan*). See also Dajani, *Iron Age Tombs from Irbid* in *ADAJ* 8-9.

From Irbid a road runs south to Husn and Jarash (40 kms) and to Ajlun direct (32 kms).

Husn stands on Tell el Husn, a tell which has some 10.2 m of accumulated deposit. From meagre findings we know that it goes back to the Early Bronze Age, and that it flourished in the Roman and Byzantine times. It is usually identified with *Dion*, a city of the Decapolis. (For marble basin found there see *LA XIV*).

Husn has many churches. There is a Latin Parish (1885) and Rosary Sisters (1902) with boys' and girls' schools. There is a Melkite Parish and an Orthodox parish and school. There is an Anglican mission and an Adventist. Husn was the first parish of the Melkites in East Jordan: it began in 1897.

From Irbid on the way to Husn you pass the town of Aidun.

This also is a claimant for Dion, but it has very little of anything ancient: a cross on a lintel has been reused in the Weli of Khadr el Akhdar. Farther east is *Es Sarīh* with Roman and Byzantine remains. The Christians of *Es Sarīh* are served from Husn and Irbid by Melkites and Orthodox.

The road from Irbid to Jarash has many important villages on the right of the road: *Zabda*, *Natifa*, *Ham*, *Habaka*, *Mazar* and *Samad* with Roman and Byzantine remains. Later on the left are *Shatana* and *Sakhra*. *Shatana* has a Latin Parish (1925) with new Church (1952): Rosary Sisters (1956) have school. The Orthodox have a parish and school. There are some Melkites.

Irbid to El Hamma (34½ kms).

From Irbid a road leads north. After 5 kms you reach *Beit Ras* (House of the Summit) on your left which contains the extensive ruins of *Capitolias*, an important town in the Roman period and an archiepiscopal seat in the 5th cent. It is mentioned in the 13th cent. as having wonderful vineyards.

There is a St. Peter of *Capitolias*. A priest, Peter, married, with 3 children, at the age of 30 decided to practise absolute detachment. His wife became a hermit, the children were given to the charge of a nunnery. He attacked the Moslem religion and was brought before Omar, one of the many sons of Walid I (705-715), who condemned him to death. All the Christians of *Trichōra* (*Capitolias*, *Gadara* and *Abila*) were called to *Tur-lipara* (probably *Tur el Bariha* near Irbid)

to witness the terrible death of Peter. His feast is kept in the Orient on Nov. 23 (Oct. 4 in Istambul). The church of the Virgin, in which Peter served, should be somewhat in the vicinity of the present mosque. The recluse monastery, attached to the church of St. Sabinien (a native of Damascus, martyred with his brother Paul and sister Tatta) was situated at a distance of 12 kms to the southwest of the town, should be sought in the vicinity of Irbid (see J.T. Milik in *LA* X (170-173). Remains of a church and some Christian relics at Weli el Khadr. In 1973 it was found a bottle decorated with classical scenes as Hector going out from Troia.

A track runs east to *Marwa*, where in 1935 a frescoed tomb was discovered (See *Ladder of Progress* p. 305).

The road leads on to *Maqârin* (19 kms) on the Yarmuk, where a dam is being built, and passes by Quweilba, also called Tell Abila. This is the site of *Abila* a town of the Decapolis. In 1959 a Byzantine tomb decorated with frescoes was found nearby.

At km 125 you keep to the left.

Km 135. Road to *Samar*.

Km 136. Police Post near a ruined fort.

Track on right to *Ibdar*, on left to *Hatin*.

Km 140. Track on right to *Malka*.

You continue, through wooded country to *Umm Qeis* (km 152), one of the most important towns of the Decapolis, and the capital of a district named Gadaritis. Conquered in 218 B.C. by Antiochus the Great, it was retaken by Alexander Jannaeus in 98 B.C. Pompey captured it in 65 B.C. and out of love for his Freeman Demetrius, who was born here, he rebuilt it. Later it became the seat of one of the five Jewish councils set up by order of Gabinius. Augustus gave it to Herod the Great. It was destroyed by Vespasian. In the 4th century it became an episcopal seat and flourished till the 7th century. The ruins of Gadara, which cover an extensive plateau are

imposing. The remains of three theatres, a temple, a magnificent colonnaded street, a large reservoir and an aqueduct give some idea of its former grandeur. The ruins of a later basilica can also be traced.

Some of the Roman and Byzantine remains have been built into the houses of the modern village at the east of the site. Situated 553 m above *el Hamma* it commands a beautiful view of the Sea of Galilee. But there is no reason to connect this place with the incident of the Gadarene swine of the Gospels, which is located at *Kursi*, on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee¹.

Philodemus, an Epicurean philosopher and epigrammatic poet was born in Gadara early in 1st cent. B.C. Most of his surviving epigrams are of a light and amatory character bearing out Cicero's statement concerning the licentiousness of his matter, and the elegance of his manner.

A more interesting poet was Meleager. Born in Gadara, he probably spoke Aramaic at home and knew Phoenician as well as Greek. Here is one of his epigrams:

"Island Tyre was my nurse, and Gadara, which is Attic, but lies in Syria, gave birth to me. From Eucrates I sprung, Meleager, who first by the help of the Muses ran abreast of the Grace of Menippus. If I am a Syrian, what wonder? Stranger, we dwell in one country, the world; one Chaos gave birth to all mortals".

Menippus, mentioned above, was also of Gadara. A satirist, he flourished about 280 B.C. Originally a slave and afterwards an adherent of the Cynic school of philosophy, he treated the follies of mankind, especially of philosophers, in a sarcastic tone.

Um Qeis had its martyrs. Zachary, a deacon of Gadara was decapitated under Diocletian in 303, with a companion Alpheus of

¹ For recent finds in this area see *ADAJ* 2, 1953.

Eleutheropolis (Lyddā). Their feast is kept on 17 Nov. (see *LA X*).

The road then runs down to the *Yarmuk River* (the Hieromax). The Battle of Yarmuk (Aug. 20, 636) took place farther up near Deir Ayoub and in Wadi 'Allan.

Immediately beyond the river are the famous *el Hamma* Baths. In these the Romans of Gadara used to bathe and then return to the mountain to enjoy the cool air and delightful view. Beside enjoying the baths, you may examine the remains of Roman Baths, a theatre, a temple and a synagogue.

The Ghor Canal

Here at El Hamma we find the most important work done in the country, the construction of a great irrigation canal. It is the first important hydraulic work done in this part of the world since the fall of the Roman Empire. This irrigation is of supreme importance, for only 10% of the total area of the country is arable and half of that is in the Jordan Valley. The canal utilizes the waters of the Yarmuk river which rises in Syria and forms in part the frontier with Syria and Israel. It permits the irrigation of 120,000 dunams (19,000 ha). The funds were supplied by the United States and the actual work was carried out by an Italian company from Venice.

To avoid going round the mountain, and to avoid losing the gravitational flow of the river, a tunnel 3 m in diameter and 980 m. long was excavated in the mountain (*In-take Tunnel*). The whole length of that canal is 70 kms. Traspezoidal in shape it is 2.97 m wide at the base, 9.18 m wide at brim and 2.07 m. deep. Large stretches of the canal were excavated in argil, parts in the rock. It is in great part an open canal, but in some place, to overcome the larger wadis, the water is carried by siphons. The work was begun in Nov. 1959.

The Yarmuk's flow is estimated at 20 cubic metres per second in winter and 6 to 7 in summer. The canal will draw off, without a control dam, 4 cu ms per second in summer. The proportion of salt in the Yarmuk is ideal, never exceeding 144 mg of chlorine per litre, while that of the Jordan is 390-450 mg per litre. The waters of the Yarmuk which flow into the Jordan at Naharayim, formerly reduced the salt content of the Jordan, which is now too high for irrigation purposes. This forced Israel to replace the Yarmuk waters by the Lake Kinneret-Beisan water carrier, a 1.16 m pipe into which water is pumped at a point where the Jordan flows into the Kinneret (Tiberias Lake). Technically and hydrologically Jordan can divert all the waters of the Yarmuk, as the diversion channel is connected with the Jordan in the south.

An archaeological survey was made before this irrigation scheme of the Jordan Valley was started, before the sites disappear under cultivation. The survey was carried out by Mellaart and de Contenson with funds from UNRWA. The work took 3 months: 76 sites were examined, ranging from Neolithic to Medieval Arab. The report has been published in *ADAJ* Vols. 3, 4-5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Most important was *Tell Shuneh*, lying under the present Shunet Mushawah. Other less important sites are Tell Um Hamad, esh Sherqi, Tell Abu Habil, Tell Jamid, Tell el Mafaliq, Tell es Saidiyeh el Tahta (Gharbi).

From el Hamma to Shuna

A track leads along the left bank of the Yarmuk to the very beautiful Baha'i settlement of 'Adasiya. The Baha'i community was founded in 1844 by the Persian Mirza Ali Mohammed, and is a branch of the Shi'a Moslems. Many of the Baha'is live in Acre and Haifa, but they have followers also in the West.

The road continues by *Baqura* to meet the main road at *Khirbet esh Shuna* on which you may return to Irbid or continue to the south. However, it is easier to return to Umm Qeis, and from there return to Irbid, unless you wish to face poorer roads.

Before reaching the left bank of the Yarmuk, opposite to El Hamma, a track (marked Bisharat Farm) goes off on the right to *Mukheiba*, a small village, which has a beautiful hot spring, with much the same healing properties as those on the other side of the Yarmuk.

Following this track, which is pretty rough at the best of times, you gain height quickly and having reached the top of the mountain ridge, there is a splendid view of the Yarmuk valley far below you. Continuing through country still bearing good oak, your track divides. Ahead is *Saham*, to your right is *Samar*, and to your left a new track leads down hill again to Wadi Khalid Station on the Yarmuk River. On this road after a short distance you find a fountain, Kufr Lemeh, the drinking trough of which is a beautiful sarcophagus. Round about are other ancient remains.

Following the track to *Samar*, then going left, you reach the main track leading to Umm Qeis (see above). In between this track and the road to Maqarin are the villages *Kufr Saum*, *Yubla*, *Rafid*, and *Aqraba*. *Kufr Saum*, *Saham* and *Malka* are the main centres of the Beni Kenana nahiya. *Rafid* has a Greek Orthodox Parish.

The road leads on to *Maqarin* on the Yarmuk. Leaving the villages of *Maru*, with Roman and Byzantine remains, and *Harima* well to the right, one reaches the village of *El Qisfa* on the left. Next is *Khureiba*, the first additions and then, on the hill to your left, the village itself. Shortly after to your right is the small village of *Barashta*. As you continue on the flat high ridge you see on your left an ever-deepening valley, in which

run the waters of Ain El Gazal, also called Ain Quweilba, and the valley Wadi el Quweilba. On a ridge to the west of the valley is Quweilba itself, also called *Tell Abila*¹. This is the site of *Abila*, a town of the Decapolis, with remains of 2 churches and a cemetery. (Cfr. Schumacker: *Abila of the Decapolis*, London 1889). Looking west you can see the two villages of *Hubras* with Roman and Arab remains, and *Harta*. The main Roman Road which ran from Irbid, Capitolias (*Beit Ras*) to Ga'dara (*Umm Qeis*) had a branch road to Hubras and Abila.

As the road begins to descend to the Yarmuk valley, it divides. The right goes to Maqârin station and the left to the site for the dam. Just above Maqârin station, several smaller rivers join to form one. The railway from Der'a runs alongside the winding torrent of Nahr 'Allan reinforced by Nahr el Harîr, which at the confluence of the Nahr Zeizun is joined by the waters of the Wadi esh Shallala from the south. The meeting of these rivers forms the *Sheriat el Menadireh* or the *Yarmuk*. Near Maqarin station the railway crosses for the first time the Yarmuk.

The name of this river is not met with in Holy Scripture. Pliny calls it Hieromax, and the Talmud Yarmock. The Arabs call it Sheriat (drinking-place) el Menadireh (name of Bedouin tribe).

The battle of Yarmuk was fought on Aug. 20, 636. The Greek army moved along the Yarmuk to the tableland of Nougrat which surrounds Deir Ayoub. Here they encountered the Arab army which had moved from Damascus. The Arabs pushed the Greeks back beyond the Wadi 'Allân and occupied the bridge of the Nahr er Raqqâd. Thus surrounded the Greeks fled upon the confluent of the Nahr er Raqqâd and of the Yarmuk, where they perished in large numbers. The Nahr er

¹ See 4 ADAJ (1960) 116 for tombs.

Raqqād, which rises at the foot of Hermon, joins the Yarmuk just above Wadi Khalid station, called after Khalid ibn Walid.

In Arabic history it was also known as the battle of *Yakusa*, a small stream a few miles west of the Nahr er Raqqād.

Irbid to Khirbet Esh Shuna (34 kms)

This road twists and turns down to the Jordan Valley. Just outside the town you leave to your right *El Bariha*, the ancient *Baria*, a possession of the Abbey of Mt. Tabor in Crusader days. After a few kms you descend into a wadi and climbing out again, there is the mound of Tell al Asheir. It is thought to be Iron Age. To the south of the road are great numbers of dolmens, the second biggest field after that of Damiah.

Shortly after a road goes off on the left passing by *Kufr Yuba* and *Deir es Si'na* with Roman remains. From here a track goes off on the right to *Taiyaba*. Taiyaba has a Melkite parish and an Orthodox parish. Crossing Wadi et Taiyaba it passes by *Sammu' Zimal*, with a track to *Juba* by *Es Samt* to *Deir Abu Sa'id*.

Continuing on the main road you leave to the left *Kufr An*, *Qumeim*, the Roman *Camus*, with Roman and Byzantine remains. Before reaching Shuna you find the tomb of Sheikh Maad. When the plague of Amwas broke out in 639, Abu 'Obeida, who was in command, died and with him Mo'adh ibn Jebel, designated to succeed him, and also Shurahbil ibn Hasana. The tomb of Abu 'Obeida is in 'Amta, that of Shurahbil near the Wadi Yābis and that of Mo'adh or Maad here.

Shuna is the site of the Crusader Qosseir Mouîn, mentioned in the Crusader attack on East Jordan in 1217. Sugar was then grown in this district. This known as *Shuna Shamaliya* (northern Shuna).

The important *Tell Shuneh* now is covered by Kh. esh-Shuna and Kh. esh Sheikh Hussein near the crossroads. There is a road to Jisr el Majami and road to 'Adasiya.

On reaching the Jordan Valley a road to the north, a branch to Jisr Majami, goes to *Adasiya*.

Another branch goes south along the left bank of the Jordan to Shunat Nimrin. This road passes by *Manshiya* and *Waqqas* with Roman, Byzantine and Arab remains, and after crossing *Wadi Ziqlab*, and before the short branch on the right to Jisr Sheikh Hussein, a road turns east up into the hill country to the town of *Deir Abu Sa'id*, a pleasant village without any particular interest, although it has Roman, Byzantine and Arab remains. Lower down near Juffein are dolmens.

From *Deir Abu Sa'id* you may return to Irbid or to Ajlun. The main road south passes by *Tabaqat Fahl* (*Pella*).

Due to the presence of refugee camps and new localities springing up under the impact of the East Ghor Canal, there is some ambiguity in place names in the East Ghor through which this road runs. Often a single locality has more than one name: on the other hand a particular name may apply to a cluster of localities of which it forms the nucleus.

PART IV

Castles in the Desert

The Caliphs of the first dynasty, the Umayyads, were by instinct lovers of the desert from which their forebears had come. At the same time they had tasted of the comforts of a new civilization in the sown. These two they sought to combine by gilding at the fringes of the desert small but lovely palaces. Here they would spend a few weeks of each year indulging in hawking, hunting and horse-racing during the day, to be followed by the delights of the Turkish bath with the attendant amusement of singing and dancing. Perhaps at night the Caliph sat reading the stars, as his fathers had done of yore as they trekked across the sandy wastes. It is well to remember that of the 57 stars chosen by international agreement for navigation purposes, 38 have names of Arabic origin, such as Acrab (عقرب : scorpion), Al-Gidi (الجدي : the kid), Altair (الطير : the flyer), Deneb (ذنب : tail), Pherkad (فرقد : calf). And some of the commonest words used by navigators come from the Arabic, as, Azimuth (السموٰت), nadir (نازٰر), zenith (السمٰت), alidade (المدّاد).

There are examples of these palaces in the desert north of Damascus, but the best are those east of the Jordan and the very fine example is at Khirbat el Mafjar near Jericho. Beyond the line that divides the sown from the desert are a row of these palaces and hunting lodges either erected by Umayyad architects on Byzantine and Persian patterns or restored by them. Some no doubt were

originally Roman fortresses. They reveal a certain amount of delight in arts, painting, sculpture, music and dancing. In these early days of Islam there was no objection to the representation of human and animal forms, and the frescoes are probably an index to the life at the Umayyad Court.

Qasr el Hallabat

A track goes off the Zarqa-Mafraq road at km 38, and another at km 42-43. Both come to the top of a knoll on which is Qasr el Hallabat. The fortress was built by the soldiers of the Roman Governor Phurnius Julianus in 212 A.D., at the time of Emperor Caracalla. According to a second inscription, it was renovated in 529 A.D. at the time of Emperor Justinian.

Basalt blocks inscribed with a decree of Emperor Anastasius in Greek, were reused in a major transformation of the fortress undertaken in the Umayyad Period.

In recent excavations directed by Ghazi Bisheh, of the Department of Antiquities, in two rooms, in the southeastern corner of the fortress, beautiful sections of mosaic floors were found, with a group of lively animals, birds and fishes: a deer, a gazelle, a rabbit, and a pair of partridges facing each other in a geometrical pattern. It was one of the desert forts put up by the Romans to control raiding by the desert tribes. A few kms east of Hallabat is a low wall which runs for about 5 kms. It has semicircular bastions at intervals, and seems to have been part of the outer defense works. The water supply was kept in cisterns in the wadi to the north and west.

Qasr Hammam esh Sarkh (or Sarah)

About 4 kms southeast of Hallabat is another Umayyad building. It may have been a hunting lodge, although more probably a bath (*hamman* = bath). It is in a ruined state.

Qasr el Azraq

From Amman to Azraq (turning off the

Amman-Mafraq road at km 38) the distance is 115 kms. It is somewhat shorter if the time of year allows passage through the lower section; what used to be known as Dawson's Field (locally El Mukheizin). One sees first at the modern Fort. To the south is a poor village Azraq Shishan, amid tall eucalyptus, tamarisk and date-palms and beyond it several kms of marsh land. 5 kms to the east you come to another village, Azraq Druze, surrounding the ruins of the ancient fort of Qasr el Azraq.

South of the fort is a beautiful spring that accounts for the marsh lands. There is a pumping station that delivers water to H5 on the I.P.C. line, 40 kms away. At Shaumari, not far distant, is a desert agriculture Experimental Station.

The whole area is one mass of basalt rock and here and there rise out white salt hills. The population comprises some Chechens and some Druzes who settled there after the Druze rebellion in Syria, and now make a living from the production of salt, although of late the American Point 4 organization have drained some of the swamps and canalized the water to irrigate a tract of land to the south. During this operation, while clearing a spring south of the Police Fort, the workers came upon a Palaeolithic site which gave up some 400 tools.

This oasis, situated on the very edge of the lava country, is also strategically situated guarding the north end of the Wadi Sirhan, one of the main highways leading into the heart of the Arabian desert. It is a typical oasis with groves of palms. In season thousands of duck and other migrating water fowl congregate there, and many fall to the hunters' guns. Winding through the pools are ancient walls, probably built to regulate the water flow.

North of the palm groves is the Castle. It is a large enclosure about 80 metres square, with towers at the four corners. It is constructed of basalt. An Arabic inscription over the main door states that it was built

(rebuilt?) by Ezziddin Aybak in 634 of the Hegira, i.e. 1236-7. He was governor from 1213 to 1238, at the time of the Crusades. This was the last reconstruction. From a Greek and Latin inscription on fragments in the courtyard we learn that the building was dedicated to the Emperors Diocletian and Maximian (c. 300). There is also an inscription of the Emperor Jovian (363), who may have restored it. Nothing else is known of it, until the place gained a certain fame as the head-quarters of Lawrence of Arabia during the Arab Revolt.

You return to the modern fort and the Police will show you the track to follow on your way to *Qasr 'Amra* (c. 25 kms) or *Qasr Kharama* (50 kms).

Qasr el 'Amra

Also called *Quseir 'Amra* (Little red Castle) as *Quseir* is diminutive of *Qasr*, castle, from the Latin *castrum*.

It is situated in the *Wadi Butm*, so called from the butm or pistacia tree which grows around there.

It seems to have been a hunting-lodge and a bath-house closely resembling Hammam es Sarkh. It is the best preserved monument of its kind and period known. Every available inch of wall is covered with frescoes. These are the earliest illustrations of Moslem pictorial art, and they indicate workmanship of Christian painters. Some of the rooms have mosaic floors.

It consists of three parallel vaulted halls with a dark room at the end of each of the lateral halls, probably for the midday siesta. The walls are all decorated, the middle hall with the Caliph on his throne. On the west wall to the right, are six enemies of Islam with their names in Greek and Cufic: the Byzantine Emperor, Roderick, last king of the Spanish Visigoths, Chosroes, emperor of Persia, the Negus of Abyssinia, and finally two others

whose names cannot be distinguished. As Roderick came to the throne in 710 A.D. and was killed the following year, the date of the frescoes can be closely estimated. Their construction dates between 705 and 715, the reign of Walid I. Other pictures portray nude dancers, musicians and merry-makers. To the east was the calidarium. The ceiling is a representation of part of the night sky with the various constellations in their zodiacal houses. It is not always correct. The last room was never completed. To the north is the cistern and well. In spring, pools of water remain in the wadi and it is a favourite place for gazelles.

Qasr el Kharana

The desert here is difficult to cross; it is typical *hamada*: bleached flint earth, dotted with sparse, brittle shrubs. It is easier to go back on your tracks until you reach the one to the right, to Kharana. A good map is essential, plus a good sense of direction, unless you have been there before.

Qasr el Kharana is only about 15 kms southwest of Quseir 'Amra.

This is one of the best preserved palaces, and considering its strength, it was never meant to serve as a fortress. And yet its purpose is not very clear. There is no water supply apparent. A Cufic inscription over a door in the upper storey gives the date, as Sept. 711, but this is not the date of the building. Built into the jambs of the entrance door are the remains of an inscription in Greek, suggesting an earlier construction. It may have been pre-Moslem and had something to do with the defence of Wadi Sirhan.

The palace is almost square in form with circular towers at each angle, and a semi-circular tower in the centre of each wall, except the south one. These towers are only ornamental. The entrance in the south wall is flanked by two quarter-circular towers. It is built of plastered undressed stones. Inside the castle,

two storeys of vaulted rooms are built around a court. An interesting feature are the groups of three small columns against the walls, on which the arches rest. They support the vaults of the ceiling. This castle, together with Qasr et Tuba and Quseir 'Amra were first discovered and described by Musil in 1898.

Qasr et Tuba

A good track runs south from Kharana (about 46 kms) to Qasr et Tuba.

It was originally built in the form of a rectangle, enclosing numerous vaulted brick chambers. The other walls with round towers at the corners are still fairly well preserved, but the whole is in poor condition.

Qasr et Tuba was not a stronghold, but just a station for passing caravans. The similarities between the forms of construction and ornamentation of Qasr et Tuba and Qasr el Mushatta have been pointed out. There is difficulty in dating both places. Some attribute them to the Umayyads, others to the Lakhmids or the Ghassanides, and perhaps all three had a share in them.

Muwaqqar

From Qasr et Tuba it is easier to return to Qasr el Kharana and follow the main track west to *Muwaqqar* (35 kms), where the remains of an Umayyad castle are so scant that a plan of them cannot be made. From an inscription in Cufic it appears that it was built by Yazid II (720-24)¹.

In the plain below Muwaqqar is a fine Roman reservoir which was repaired in 1953 with help of Point IV.

From Muwaqqar to Amman it is 25 kms.

¹ Hamilton: *Some Eighth Century Capitals from al Muwaqqar: An Eighth Century Water--Gauge at al Muwaqqar*. Mayer: *Note on the Inscription from al Muwaqqar*, Q.D.A.P. 1946.

Qasr el Mushatta

After Muwaqqar a track runs south (about 13 kms) to Mushatta. It can also be reached by another track. *Qasr el Mushatta* (*winter resort*) is a square building, each side 144 metres. Its walls were strengthened by 23 round or half-round towers. The façade of the building as well as the gateway towers were decorated with geometrical and floral patterns in relief, enclosing some animal motifs. The bulk of these decorations were removed in 1904 to the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin and suffered in World War II. Only a portion remains. Tristram (*The Land of Moab*) seems to be the first to describe Mushatta.

The interior of the palace was never finished, except for two buildings, one at the entrance and one at the north end, and even of these not much of interest remains. With good reason its erection is attributed to Walid II (743-4), who was more given to music and poetry and the pleasure of the desert than to state affairs. It was he who also built *Khirbet el Minya* near Tabgha, and occupied el Qastal.

Bayir

Eighty five kms southeast of el Qatrana (or 70 kms south of Qasr et Tuba) is *Bayir*. It means *wells*, and it has two important ones. It was certainly a Nabataean fort, and possibly it was also used by the Umayyads. Only fragmentary remains are to be seen, beside a modern border fort.

From Bayir there is a track to Ma'an (183.5 kms), which passes by *El Jafr*, a desert Police Fort, where there is a castle of Sheikh Auda Abu Tayi, the ally of Lawrence.

From Ma'an there is a long, weary, irregular track (180 kms) to *Kilwa* in the heart of *Jabal Tubaiq*, a journey not to be undertaken without a reliable guide. It was in this wilderness sometime in the 6th cent., that some monks settled. They built a little village, a dam across

the wadi, but on what they lived is a mystery. An Arabic inscription on a door lintel shows that they were still there in the 8th cent.

The site was first noticed by Gertrude Bell in 1914 on her way to Hayil (see *Letters* p. 273). Later it was examined by Nelson Glueck (see *The Other Side of the Jordan* p. 43), who places the monastic settlement at about 1000 A.D.

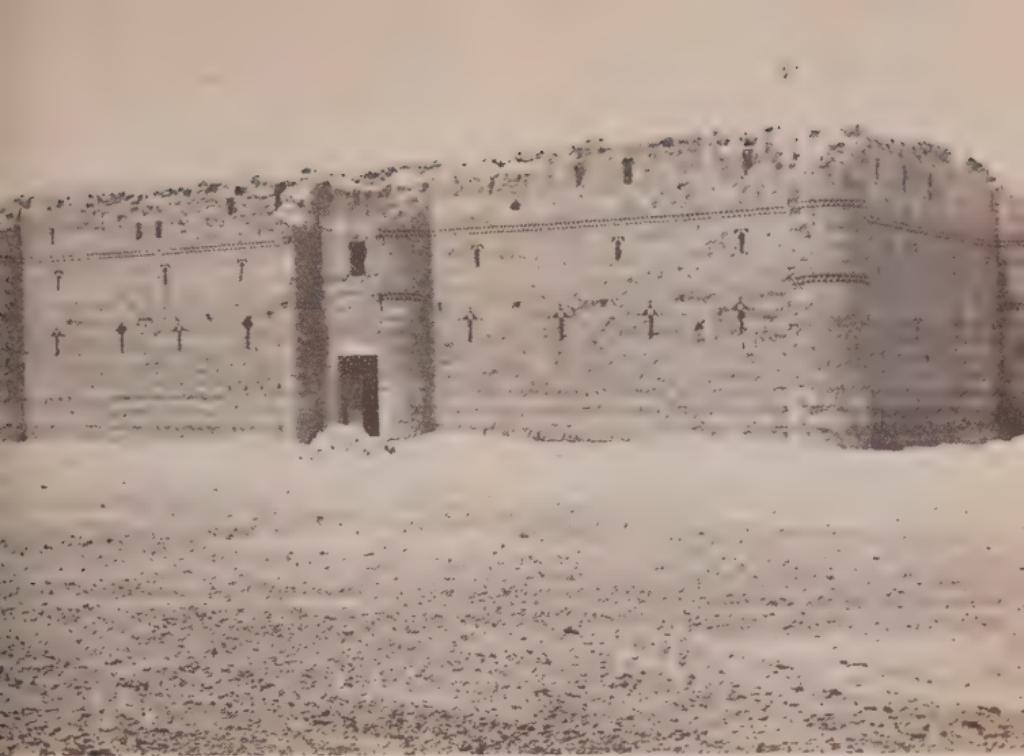
A few hundred metres northeast of the settlement are scratched a number of drawings of animals and humans. They belong to the Upper Palaeolithic period, and are the only prehistoric drawings found so far in Jordan. Scratched above them are Thamudic inscriptions, made some 1,300 years ago. Around the rock are flint flakes and implements.

We should remember that this eastern desert, representing ninety per cent of the land mass of the country, supports only five per cent of the total population — the proud nomadic Bedouin.

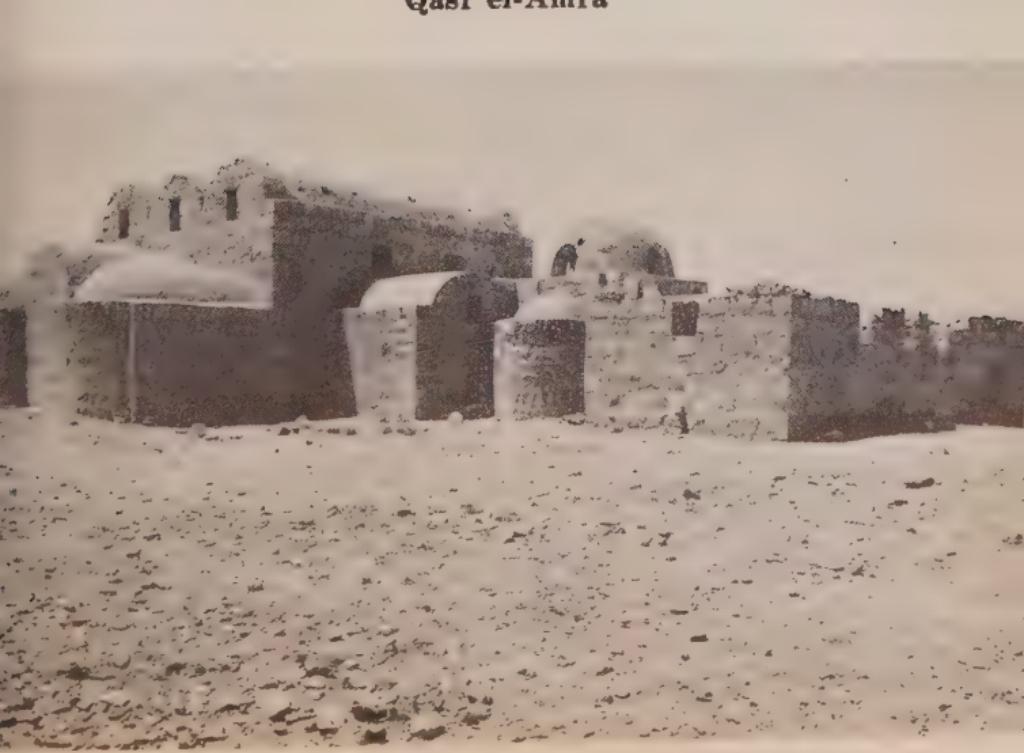
FAUNA

For those interested in living things, the countryside has many animals and birds. There is the mole, which is almost blind and does great damage to crops. You can see its works in mounds everywhere. There is the Agama Lizard (some of them nearly 1 m in length). The Bedouins believe, incorrectly, that their bite is fatal and that they suck the milk from sleeping goats. The Agama has a broad head and a loose warty starred skin. In Arabic it is called *Hardun*. About 30 species of lizards are known in Jordan, but the little gecko is the most gentle. The chameleon is always a friendly little reptile. Everywhere on the stony ground you can find the millipede (*spirostreplus syriacus*) with its extraordinary tank-track action.

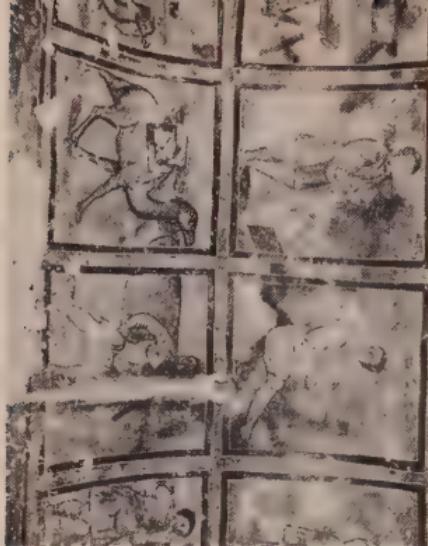
There are 20 or so species of snakes in Jordan but few of them are poisonous. The



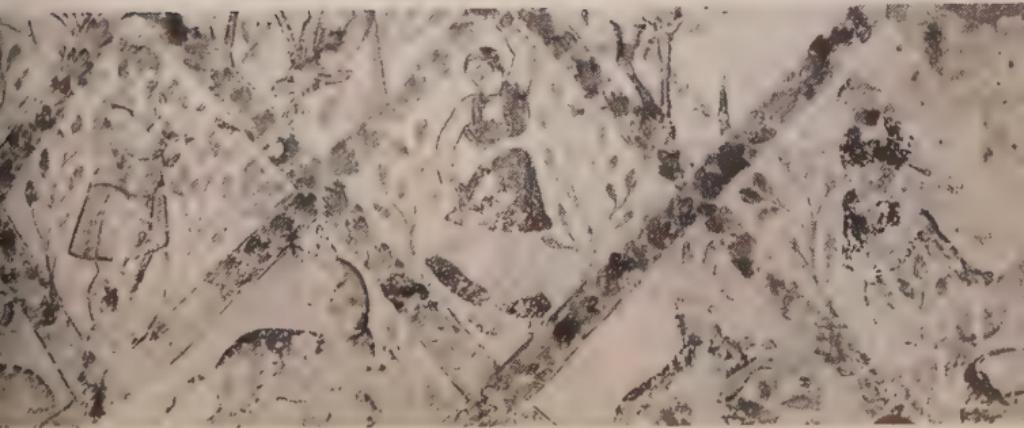
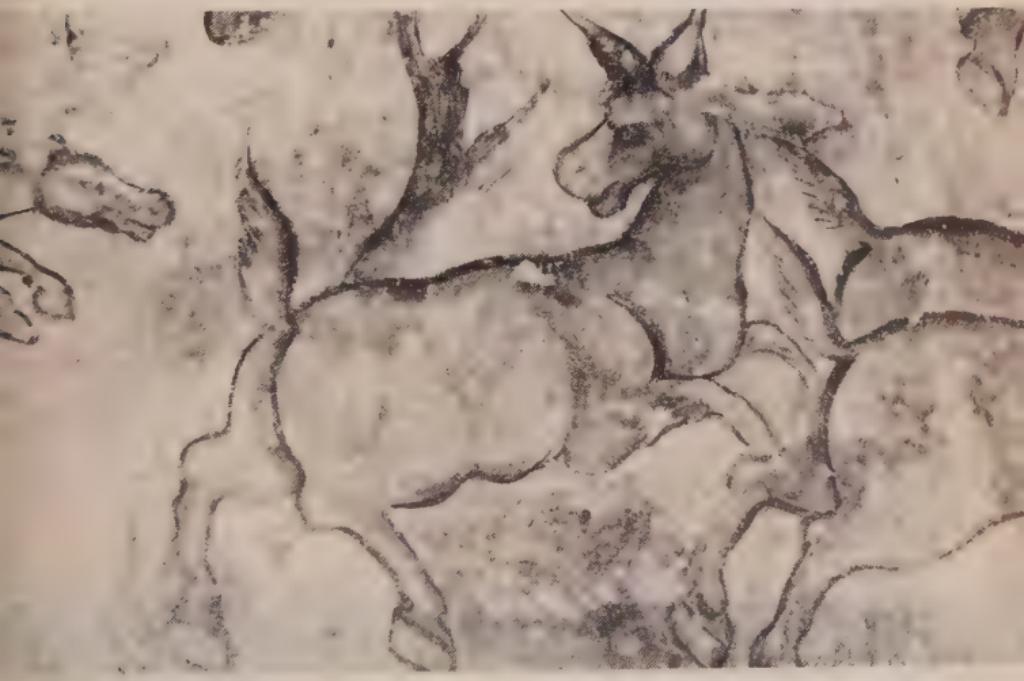
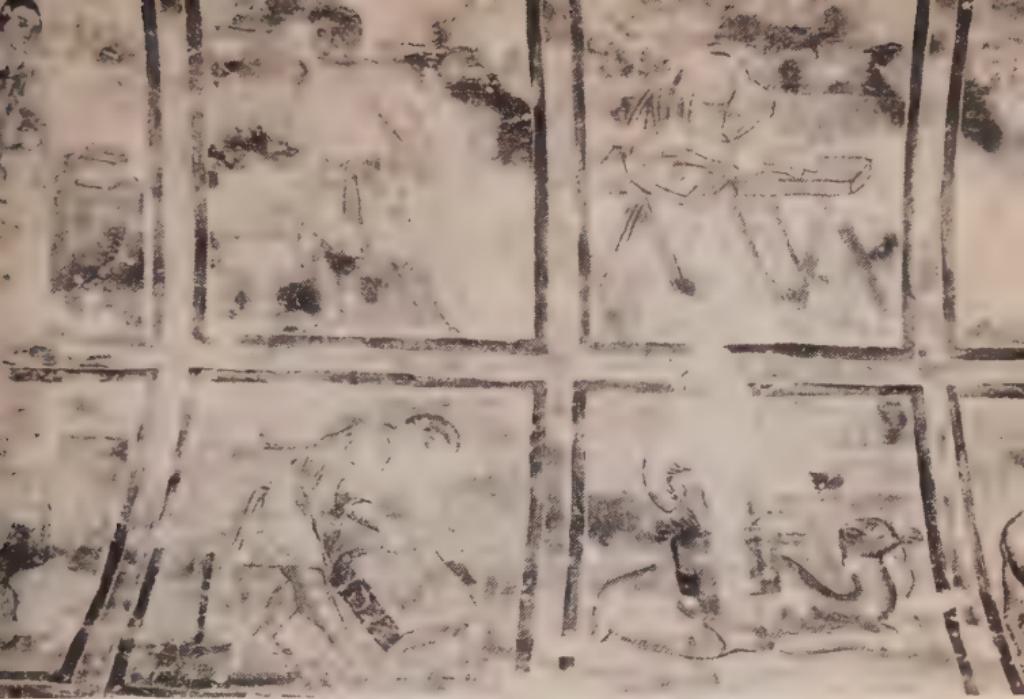
Qasr el-Kharana



Qasr el-Amra



Frescoes in Qasr el-'Amra





Christian Church and College



species most prone to attack human beings is the *Efa (echis colorata)* found in rocky desert. The plump Horned Cerastes (*Cerastes cornutus*) is common in the desert and is the terror of the Bedouin. Rather dangerous too, are the black (*Nebo hierochonticus*) and yellow scorpions. There are certain spiders whose bite can cause death from neurotoxic poisoning.

The scarab beetle (*Scarabaeus sacer*) is very common. It can be seen trundling a great ball of camel dung which it will bury in the sand after the female has laid her eggs in it. The scarab or dung beetle was sacred to the Egyptian sun-god in his form of Kheperi at Heliopolis. A great variety of seals and rings has been found representing scarabs, often with an inscription on the reverse side. It is extraordinary how you can find fresh water shrimps in desert pools. These little arthropods appear in pools which have been dry for years. They reproduce rapidly before the temporary pool dries up and leave their eggs embedded in the mud to continue the cycle. In California there was an authenticated example of this in which the eggs retained life for 25 years and then hatched successfully.

If the smaller creatures don't interest you, you may find something appealing in the larger members of the animal kingdom: the ruminating desert hare for example; or the sand cat (*felis margarita*), whose feet are covered with pads of coarse hair to enable it to move quickly in the sand. One wonders what such animals feed on in the wilds. The most common canine is the pariah dog (*Canis putiatim*) although the Bedouin also have *saluqi* (from Sāluq, the town) as pets. This dog is a hybrid of the pariah: a hound breed with feathered ears, tail and legs. It is also known as the royal dog of Egypt and was probably the *keleb* of the Bible.

The Hijaz Railway

In 1900, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his accession to the sultanate, Abdul Hamid proclaimed the news of a great railway project to link Damascus with Medina and Mecca. The idea was spawned in the mind of a German-American, Dr. O. Zimple, as early as 1864. Izzet Pasha al 'Abed, a Syrian Arab, was appointed president of the Hedjaz Railroad Commission, and was charged with the financial organization and construction of it. The Sultan donated \$ 250,000, as did the Khedive of Egypt, and the Shah of Iran did the same. The people contributed what they could: an impost of five gold *piastres* was collected on every new house built in the Ottoman Empire: every member of the Turkish Civil Service and Army contributed 10 per cent of one months salary: every male citizen in the Empire paid a tax of 5 gold *piastres*. There were special Hedjaz Railway stamps. In fact Izzet Pasha did so well that a \$ U.S. 1,75 million surplus remained was left at the completion of the railway. It was to be operated by the *Waqf* (Moslem religions endowment).

Work began in May 1900. The route was surveyed by a Turkish engineer Hadschtar Muchtar Bey, who simply followed the pilgrim caravan route from Damascus to Medina, believing that over centuries the caravans had found the best route and the ancient wells, both as necessary for a railway engine as for a camel. The actual work was carried out by an international team of 43 engineers under the German Messner. Labour was provided by a draft of 5,630 enlisted men, mostly from Syrian and Iraqi regiments.

Some 2000 bridges and culverts were built from local stone over rivers and wadies, and built so well that 1500 still stand today. The 42 inch gauge, just over a metre in width size and

unique among the world's railroads, was undoubtedly selected as a military precaution. Forty-eight stations at intervals of approximately 30 kms were erected: far too many, but convenient for the armed patrols stationed in these fortress-like constructions.

The line reached Der'a in Sept. 1901, Amman in 1903, Ma'an in 1904, Tabuk in 1906, Mada'in Saleh in 1907 and Medina in 1908; in all nearly 500 kms of rail.

Sultan Abdul Hamid and the Minister of the Waqf were deposed by the revolt of the "Young Turks" the very year the railway was completed. It carried Moslem pilgrims for a few years and then World War I came. Lawrence of Arabia saw its military value: "Our ideal", he wrote "was to keep his (the Turk's) railway just working but only just, with the maximum loss and discomfort". He, with the Arab tribesmen, in four months destroyed 17 locomotives and many kilometres of track. In all only 80 bridges were destroyed, and so the line was repaired and up to the present has continued a regular service from Damascus to Ma'an.

Political considerations blocked the service from reaching Medina until 1955 when a committee was established with four members each from Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia to study the matter. This Committee in 1956 gave an American firm a contract to make a survey, and on its conclusion the three governments decided to reactivate the line. The project was to be financed by splitting the estimate \$ U.S. 30 million construction costs equally among the three governments, with the aid of an eight-year loan for materials by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The successful bidder for the project, a consortium of the British engineering firms Alderton Construction Westminster and Martin Cowley, signed the contract for the work on Dec. 6, 1963. This group retained Mr. L.B. Franco, an American, as project

manager and Mr. William Cruse, president of the American Railway Engineers' Assn., as chief engineer. Work began in March 1964.

The old steel ties are being replaced by ties of worm-resistant and practically indestructible Australian *Jarrah* wood.

During the *hajj* season 12 trains would be put in service and would make the trip in 24 hours. It is expected that settlements will grow up around many of the 33 of the 48 original stations which are being rebuilt. Perhaps one day a spur line will be laid to 'Aqaba and a branch line from Medina to Yenbo on the Red Sea.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF DATES IN ARAB HISTORY

B.C.	Genesis 10: People & districts of Arabia.
853	First mention of Arabs, in an inscription of Shalmaneser III (Assyrian).
750	Building of Ma'rib dam by Sabaean Kings of South Arabia (Saba may be Biblical Sheba).
650	Nabataeans (North Arabia) pay tribute to Assyrians.
525-456	Aeschylus, in Prometheus, makes first classical reference to Arabia.
542	Ma'rib dam bursts.
530	Arabaya mentioned in Persian cuneiform documents.
484-424	Herodotus, first mentions Arabia (analogy with Italia).
332	Death of Alexander the Great.
312	Antigonus captures Petra.
169	Aretas (Arabic Mârith) becomes king of Petra.
64	Pompey captures Syria.
24	Expedition of Aelius Gallus to Southern Arabia.
A.D.	
106	Nabataean Kingdom becomes part of the Roman Province of Arabia.
273	Palmyra falls.
342	The Emperor Constantine.
476	Fall of Rome.
525	Fall of Himyar. Ethiopians occupy Southern Arabia.
575	Persian occupation of Southern Arabia, which for a few years becomes a satrapy.

602 End of Arab principality of Hîra, on Iraq-Arabian frontier.

614 Persian invasion.

622 Hijrah of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina. Beginning of Islamic era.

630 Mohammed takes Mecca.

632 Death of Mohammed. Abu Bakr becomes the first Caliph (632-4).

633-37 Arabs conquer Syria and Iraq.

638 Omar captured Jerusalem (634-44).

640 Caesarea taken.

639-42 Conquest of Egypt.

656 Murder of Othman (644-56). Beginning of the first civil war between Moslems.

657 Battle of Siffin (on the Euphrates) between Ali and Mu'awiyah (Rise of Kharijites).

661 Murder of Ali at Kufa. Beginning of Umayyad dynasty.

680 Massacre of Husayn at Karbala (and rise of Shi'ism).

683-90 Second Civil War.

685-87 Revolt of Mukhtar in Iraq. Beginning of extremist Shi'ism.

696 Abdul Malik (685-705) introduces Arab coinage as part of reorganization of Imperial administration. Same built Dome of the Rock (687-691).

711 Moslems land in Spain.

732 Charles Martel holds up advance of Moslems into France.

750 The fall of the Omayyads and accession of the Abbasids.

Capital moves from Syria to Iraq.

751 Arabs capture Chinese paper-makers in Central Asia; use of paper begins to spread westward across Islamic Empire.

756 Umayyad Prince, Abd er Rahman, becomes independent Amir of Cordova.

762-3 Foundation of Baghdad by Mansur (754-75).

788 Independent Idriside dynasty in Morocco.

800 Independent Aghlabid dynasty in Tunisia.

803 Harun ar-Rashid (786-809) deposes Barmecides.

809-13 Civil war of Amin and Ma'mun (sons of Rashid).

813-33 Reign of Ma'mun. Development of Arabic science and letters.

825 (7?) Aghlabides of Tunisia begin conquest of Sicily.

833-42 Reign of Mu'tasim. Beginning of Turkish domination.

836 Foundation of Sâmarra.

868 Ahmad ben Tûlûn, a Turkish general, founds a dynasty in Egypt and later in Syria (868-905).

869-83 Revolt of negro slaves in southern Iraq.

871 Rise of Saffarids in Persia.

877 (3?) Death of Hunayn ibn Ishaq (Jannitius), translator of Greek scientific works into Arabic.

890 First appearance of Carmathians.

901-06 Carmathians active in Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia.

909 Establishment of Fatimide Caliphate in North Africa.

925 (3?) Death of al Razi (Rhazes), the Arab physician.

929 Abd ar Rahman III of Cordova adopts title of Caliph.

932 Persian Buwayhid dynasty established in western Persia.

935 Creation of office of Amir al Oumarâ, commander-in-chief of Turkish guards in Baghdad, and effective ruler.

945 Buwayhids occupy Baghdad.

969 Fatimids conquer Egypt, Cairo founded.

c.970 Seljuq Turks enter territories of the Caliphate from the East.

1030 Umayyad Caliphate of Spain breaks up into party kingdoms (*Mulûk al Tawa'if*).

1037 Death of Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna).

1048 Death of Bîrûnî.

1055 Seljuks take Baghdad.

1056-57 Hilali Arab invaders sack Qairawan.

1061 Normans take Messina, begin conquest of Sicily.

1070-80 Seljuks occupy Syria and Palestine.

1085 Spaniards capture Toledo.

1086 Almoravid victory at Sagradas.

1090 Hassan ibn al Sabbah (founder of the Assassins) seizes Alamût.

1094 Death of Fatimide Caliph Mustanir, split in Isma'ili movement; Hasan ibn al Sabbah leads extremist (Assassin) wing.

1096 Crusaders arrive to the Near East.

1099 Crusaders take Jerusalem.

1111 Death of al Ghazzali (L. Algazel) greatest theologian of Islam.

1127 Zanzi, a Seljuk officer, seizes Mosul, begins Muslim reaction against Crusaders.

1171 Saladin declares Fatimide Caliphate at an end, founds Ayyûbid dynasty in Syria and Egypt.

1187 Battle of Hattin. Capture of Jerusalem.

1217 St Francis in Palestine and beginning of the presence of Franciscans in the region.

1220 Mongols conquer eastern territories of the Caliphate.

1236 Spaniards capture Cordova.

1250-60 Rise of Mamluk Sultanate in Egypt and Syria.

1250 King Alphonso X of Spain establishes a school of Latin and Arabic studies in Seville.

1258 Mongols under Hûlakû capture Baghdad and end the Caliphate.

1260 Mamluks defeat Mongols at 'Ain Jalût in Palestine, save Syria and Egypt.

1291 Fall of Acre.

1333 Official Papal institution of the Custody of the Holy Land granted to the Franciscan Friars.

1400-01 Tamerlane ravages Syria.

1406 Death of Ibn Khaldûn, historical philosopher.

1453 Fall of Constantinople.

1492 Spaniards capture Granada.

1497 Vasco da Gama sails to India via Cape of Good Hope.

1517 Ottoman Turks conquer Syria and Egypt, destroy Mamluk Sultanate.

1535 First capitulations granted by Ottoman Sultan to France.

1639 Ottomans take Iraq from Persia.

1792 Death of Mohammed Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, founder of the Wahabi sect in Arabia.

1798-1801 French occupation of Egypt.

1805 Mohammed Ali becomes ruler of Egypt.

1809 Beginning of regular shipping service from India to Suez.

1820 British pact with Arab Sheikhs on Persian Gulf coast.

1822 Mohammed Ali establishes printing-press in Egypt.

1830 French invade Algeria.

1831-40 Egyptian occupation of Palestine and Syria.

1836 British steamboat on the rivers of Iraq.

1836 Beginning of regular British steamship service to Egypt and Syria.

1839 British occupation of Aden.

1847 First book in Arabic published in Jerusalem (by Franciscan Printing Press).

1851-57 Alexandria-Cairo-Suez railway

1861 Creation of autonomous Lebanon.

1869 Suez Canal opened.

1881 French occupy Tunisia.

1882 British occupy Egypt.

1901 Ibn Saud begins the restoration of Saûdi Emirate of Najd.

1908 Young Turks' Revolution.

1908 Completion of the railway Damascus-Medina.

1911-12 Italians take Libya.

1916 Arab revolt in the Hedjaz. Sharif Hussein assumes title of King.

1917 Balfour Declaration.

1918 End of Ottoman rule in Arab lands.

1920 Mandates established for Syria and Lebanon (French), Palestine, Trans-jordan and Iraq (British).

1922 Fuad I becomes King of Egypt.

1924 March 11. King Hussein proclaimed Caliph, in Amman.

1924 Oct. 5, King Hussein resigns in favour of his son Ali.

1924-25 Ibn Saûd conquers Hedjaz.

1931 Death of King Hussein in Cyprus.

1932 End of Mandate in Iraq.

1932 Ibn Saûd becomes King of Saudi Arabia.

1934 Peace of Ta'if between Ibn Saûd and Yemen.

1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty.

1943 End of Mandate in Syria and Lebanon, which become independent republics.

1945 Arab League formed.

1946 Transjordan becomes an independent monarchy, under King Abdulla (May 25).

1948 End of Mandate in Palestine.

1950 Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan proclaimed.

1951 Libyan independence proclaimed.

1951 July 20, death of King Abdallah in Jerusalem. King Talal ascends the throne.

1952 Egypt becomes a Republic.

1953 King Hussein ascends to the Throne of Jordan.

1953 King Feisal ascends to the Throne of Iraq.

1953 Death of King Feisal of Iraq.

1955 The Baghdad Pact.

1956 English-French-Israeli Suez invasion.

1958 Arab Union of Jordan & Iraq.

1967 Arab-Israeli confrontation.

1970 Death of Nasser of Egypt.

1973 Arab-Israeli confrontation.

1975 Re-opening of the Suez Canal.

1978 Wedding of King Hussein and Queen Noor.

1981 Death of Sadat of Egypt.

1983 Opening of Queen Alya International airport.

JORDAN: Facts and Figures

The Struggle to Survive

At the end of the British Mandate of Transjordan in 1946, the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan, under the rule of King Abdullah, was established. Since that time Transjordan, later to become known as Jordan with the addition of the West Bank territory in 1948, has faced a continual struggle for survival. When the state of Israel was established in 1948 and the *de facto* partition of Palestine took place the area of the new state of Jordan increased by approximately 10 per cent while its population grew by almost 130 per cent.

One of the greatest problems facing the new state of Jordan in the early 1950s was how to feed the population which had grown from about 400,000 in 1946 to over 1 million by 1950.

Of this 1950 total about 460,000 had been residents of the West Bank, and a further 350,000 to 500,000 had been expelled or had fled from Palestine during the fighting. Once the fighting ended in 1949 when the armistice was signed these refugees were not allowed by the Israelis to return to their homes and lands.

Since that time the population has continued to grow at a rate of about 3 per cent per annum, so that by the June War of 1967 the total population of Jordan was 2.1 million, of whom about 720,000 were registered with the United Nations Relief & Works Agency as refugees.

In the highlands of northern Jordan precipitation is in excess of 500 mm/ annum and so rainfed agriculture is possible. Unfortunately, however, these well watered regions make up only a small proportion of the total

area of the country, and so their agricultural resources were quickly strained by the food demands of the new refugees. In some areas cultivation began on lands which were at best marginal for crop production. The result was that erosion led to a serious and rapid loss of the top soil in many areas.

To provide more agricultural land and a surer food supply the Government in 1958 embarked upon a major irrigation project in the Jordan Valley. This scheme, known as the East Ghor Canal Project, was to tap the waters of the River Yarmuk, the major tributary of the River Jordan, and carry them southwards along the upper terrace of the Jordan Valley in a concrete-lined canal. Water was then to be released from the canal for irrigation.

Associated with the project was a land reform and agricultural modernization programme, which has resulted in the changeover from the traditional and rather primitive cultivation of cereals to a much more commercially oriented system. Under the new system vegetables, including tomatoes, aubergines, melons and peppers, now occupy more than half the cultivated area, though wheat remains the most important single crop.

As part of the project all land within the confines of the scheme was appropriated and compensation was paid at pre-project values. New farm units of not less than three hectares and not more than 20 were established and re-allocated to the former owners. This redistribution of land meant the virtual abolition of both the very large and the very small farms, but at the same time it led to an almost 20 per cent decline in the number of land holders.

To ensure the successful implementation of the East Ghor Project a watershed management programme was introduced in the northern highlands of Jordan. The greatest problem here is soil erosion brought about by poor farming practices and deforestation. The result was that large volumes of sediment threat-

ened both the East Ghor Canal itself as well as the storage dams along the wadis draining the northern highlands which had been constructed for flood protection.

Conservation measures were initiated in the Ajlun region in the early 1960s. These consisted of the building of gully plugs, contour walling and "gradoni" terracing as well as a policy of selective afforestation and experiments with the introduction of exotic grasses.

At the same time the agricultural extension service has attempted to improve agricultural practices and to inform the farmers of the benefits of using modern agricultural techniques. Great advances were made before 1967, but with the June War of 1967 and the internal troubles which followed agricultural production tended to become disrupted. It is only in the last year or so that agricultural activity has begun to pick up again.

Agriculture continues to be an important sector of the economy, providing between 10 and 15 per cent of the total labour force. Cereals, fruit and vegetables are the main crops.

Until recently industrial activity in Jordan has tended to be on a small scale and geared towards supplying the domestic market for foodstuffs, basic household goods and building materials. Heavy industry is poorly represented, the only major plants being associated with cement production near Suweileh and Amman. Other industries include the processing of agricultural produce, such as flour milling and the pressing of olives, and small clothing factories in and around Amman. Almost all the new industrial activity has been located in the area around Amman and Zarqa. The industrial and mining sector accounts for about 16 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product.

Early in 1976 Jordan embarked upon a new Five Year Development Plan (1976-1980) during which it is hoped the total investment will be JD 765 million (\$ 2,370 million) and the rate of economic growth about 12 per cent.

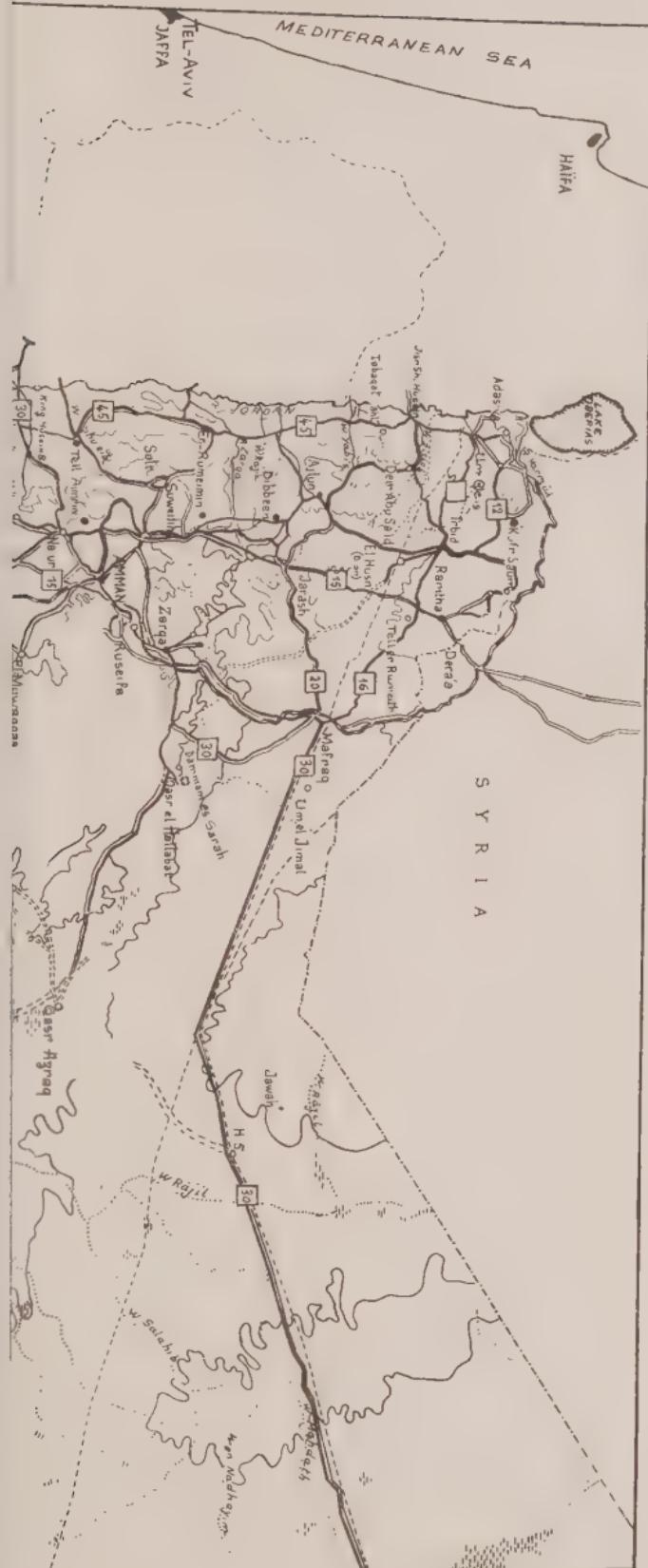
During the early years of the plan large capital sums are to be concentrated on key projects. These include the construction of the Aqaba fertilizer plant, the provision of new facilities at the port of Aqaba, the extension of the Zarqa oil refinery and the building of the new Amman international airport. The chief object of the plan is to encourage growth in the industrial and mining sector of the economy. If all goes according to schedule the annual growth rate of this sector will average about 26 per cent.

One of the main hopes for the growth of the economy lies in the continued expansion of the fertilizer industry. A new plant, run by the Jordan Fertilizer Industry Company, was opened in Aqaba in 1975, and by the end of the decade should have an output of around 600,000 tonnes a year and be earning about JD 30 million from exports.

The raw material for the fertilizer industry comes from high-grade phosphate initially discovered at Er Rusaifa, near Amman, in the 1930s. After the Second World War geological exploration revealed extensive deposits of phosphates stretching south to Hasa. At present most of the large-scale mining takes place near Hasa, by open-cast techniques, and the ore is transported southwards to Aqaba for export. In 1975 the export of phosphate ore earned Jordan JD 21 million. Further developments are expected to increase this figure to almost JD 100 million by the end of the Plan period.

Another operation which might achieve results during the current plan is the extraction of potash from the Dead Sea. Initially it was planned to begin work on the project at Safi in 1968, but the June War of 1967 prevented it. It is expected that if the test project work is successful more than 500,000 tons of potash will be produced annually from the scheme.

Although a number of minerals have been





proved to exist in Jordan, few appear to be present in commercial quantities. A possible exception is copper in the Wadi Aruba, where reserves have been estimated at about 55 million tons. So far there are no ready plans for large-scale mining.

Jordan has no commercial reserves of petroleum, but the Trans Arabian Pipeline, from Saudi Arabia to the Mediterranean coast in Lebanon, runs through its territory and supplies crude oil for Jordan's only refinery, at Zarqa. Output from the refinery was 750,000 tons per year in 1974/75, but it is hoped that by the end of the plan this figure will have been raised to 3.5 million tons per year and all domestic requirements for petroleum products will be met from this source.

Only JD 40 million are to be invested in the agricultural sector during the current plan, together with an extra JD 76 million on irrigation projects. It is expected that the growth rate of the agricultural sector will be about 7 per cent per annum. Major emphasis is to be placed on orchard development, the intensification of agricultural production in the rain-fed areas of the north of the country and on the breeding of dairy cattle. Almost one third of the expenditure on irrigation will be devoted to the Maqarin Dam on the River Yarmuk, which is a key feature of the East Ghor Canal Project. It is hoped that this will enable a further 36,000 hectares of land to be irrigated. The East Ghor Canal Project is also to be extended towards the south.

One of Jordan's greatest resources are its historical remains covering 10,000 years. Unfortunately many of these, including the great Christian shrines at Jerusalem and Bethlehem, are situated on the West Bank which was invaded and occupied by the Israelis in the June War of 1967. Before the 1960s tourism was not of great importance to the Jordanian economy, but the number of visitors grew from about 200,000 in 1962 to more than 600,000 in

1966, and it looked as if a tourist boom was under way. However, the June War and its aftermath reduced the number of visitors to only 340,000 in 1969. In the following year there were severe internal troubles as King Hussain sought to establish control over the Palestinians, and the number of visitors dropped to 256,000. Since that time numbers have grown gradually. Jordan has to some extent benefited from the troubles in Lebanon as Amman has been able to provide some of the facilities for businessmen which Beirut is no longer able to do. On the other hand the general insecurity in the region effects the number of tourists willing to visit Jordan.

About JD 24 million are to be invested in the tourist industry during the present Five Year Plan, with almost three quarters of the total expected to come from the private sector. A large part of the monies available will be spent on developing tourist facilities at the Roman city of Jerash in the north and the Nabataean centre of Petra in the south. It is also hoped to develop the Main and Zara hot springs as tourist centres. If all goes according to plan the income from tourism is expected to increase from JD 21 million in 1975 to more than JD 40 million in 1980.

The future of the Jordanian economy is not easy to predict; what is clear is that the country faces a long uphill struggle. The basic problem stems from the imbalance in external trade. In 1975 imports amounted to JD 243 million but exports to only JD 83 million. Of these export revenues phosphates and tourism accounted for more than half the total. By the end of the Five Year Plan period with further increases in the production of phosphates and fertilizers and a marked expansion of the tourist industry, the discrepancy between imports and exports ought to be markedly reduced.

Land area

95,396 sq kms (36,823 square miles).

Jordan is an almost completely land-locked state with sea access only in the south through the port of Aqaba. It is bordered by Syria to the north, Iraq to the east, Saudi Arabia to the east and south and Israel to the west.

It stretches from about 29° to 33° north of the equator and from about 35° to 39° east of Greenwich.

Geography

Jordan consists mainly of a tilted plateau region reaching a maximum altitude in excess of 1,000 ms overlooking the Dead Sea lowlands. The plateau slopes downwards in an easterly and southerly direction towards the deserts of Iraq and Saudi Arabia. In the west, the edge of the plateau is abruptly marked by the major rift system of the Dead Sea lowlands, which includes the lowest point on earth, more than 400 ms below sea level. Many of the streams flowing from the plateau region into the Dead Sea lowlands have carved spectacular gorge-like valleys, which now serve as important routeways. Relatively featureless desert plains occupy large portions of the east and south of the country.

Climate

Jordan has a modified Mediterranean type of climate with hot, dry summers and cold, damp winters. Almost all the precipitation is associated with eastward moving depressions which have originated over the Atlantic or Mediterranean regions.

Over the northern highlands, overlooking the Jordan Valley, annual precipitation totals in excess of 60 mms are recorded. Eastwards and southwards rainfall declines rapidly and well over half the total area of the country receives less than 100 mms of precipitation a year.

In summer, when rain is almost unknown, temperatures are everywhere high, and op-

pressively so in the Dead Sea lowlands and the deserts of the south and east. Only in the highlands overlooking the Jordan Valley is it rare for summer temperatures to reach above 30°C.

In winter snow is common in the uplands, and frosts are frequent in the interior desert regions. At this time of year the only areas experiencing relatively mild conditions are the Dead Sea lowlands and the coastal regions around Aqaba.

Average monthly temperatures in the Amman area:

	°C
January	7.5
March	16.1
July	24.8
October	18.4

Population

Total population: 3.5 million (of whom about 1 million are living on the Israeli occupied West Bank).

Principal towns (East Bank only)

Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, Salt, Jerash, Mafraq, Madaba.

Languages

Arabic is the official language. Most of the higher government officials and many people in commerce and industry speak English fluently. French is spoken by a small group of the commercial community.

Religion

More than four-fifths of the population are Sunni Muslims, but there is a relatively large Christian minority, located mainly in and around Amman. There are similar Christian minorities on the West Bank, where Jews are now also found.

Constitution

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was established in 1950 as an independent sovereign state under the rule of King Abdullah. The official religion of the state is Islam and the official language is Arabic.

The succession of the monarchy is by male descent. The present ruler is King Hussein Ibn Talal, who came to the throne when still a minor after the abdication of his father, King Talal, in 1952. The King approves laws and promulgates them. He has the power to declare war, to conclude peace and to sign treaties. The National Assembly must, however, approve all treaties. The King is Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He orders the holding of elections and convenes, adjourns or prorogues the House of Representatives. The Prime Minister and members of the Senate are appointed by him.

Ministries

Agriculture, Commerce & Industry, Communications, Construction & Development, Education, Finance, Foreign Affairs & Defence, Health, Information & Culture, Interior, Islamic Affairs & Holy Places, Justice, Labour Municipal & Rural Affairs, Public Works, Supplies, Tourism, Transport, and lately a special Ministry in charge of the Affairs in the Occupied Land.

Judiciary

The law of Jordan was originally based on Islamic law, but as a result of the British Mandate of Palestine and Transjordan between 1917 and 1948 Jordan has adopted certain aspects of the English common law.

Court of Cassation

This consists of seven judges. It functions as a Supreme Court of Appeal and also sits as a High Court of Justice.

Courts of Appeal

There are two Courts of Appeal, each of three judges exercising their authority on a regional basis. Since the June War of 1967 only the eastern court based in Amman has sat.

Courts of First Instance

These are courts of general jurisdiction in all matters criminal and civil, except for certain matters allocated to the Magistrates' Courts. They are seven in number.

Magistrates' Courts

These courts, of which there are 14 exercise jurisdiction in relatively minor civil cases.

Religious courts

There are two types of religious court: the Sharia Courts for Muslims and the Ecclesiastical Courts for Christians. They are concerned mainly with religious and family matters.

Administration

The country is divided into eight governorates. Three of these governorates were occupied by the Israelis in 1967.

Governorates

Amman, Balqa, Irbid, Kerak, Ma'an, Jerusalem*, Hebron*, Nablus*

Each governorate is headed by a governor and is divided into smaller administration areas.

Information

Radio and Television

Broadcasting is regulated by the Ministry of Culture & Information. Two public bodies, the Jordan Television Corporation (JTV) and Radio Jordan (RJ) formerly known as the Hashemite Broadcasting Service, (HBS) are in charge of all broadcasting services.

Radio Jordan broadcasts programmes on

* Under Israeli occupation.

FM and medium wave for listeners in Jordan and the Arab states as well as on shortwave.

Arabic is the main language for transmission but some English-language programmes are also broadcast. The main station is located in Amman.

The Jordan Television Corporation was established in 1968, and now transmits over two channels, one in Arabic and one in French, English and Hebrew. Colour television transmission, using the PAL system, began in April 1974.

Daily newspapers

Al-Urdun, Al-Dustour, Al-Sabah, Al-Rai, Al-Sha'ab and Jordan Times.

Weekly newspapers

Akhbar al-Usbou', Amman al-Masa', Al-Hawadith, Al-Sahafi, Al-Aqsa, Al-Liwa.

There are 31 official periodicals in Jordan. The Department of Press and Publications issues information books on Jordan and serves as a link between the Government departments and the local and foreign press.

The Jordan News Agency was established in 1965 to publish and distribute news and features on Jordan. It issues daily bulletins in Arabic and English.

Education

Education is supervised by the Ministry of Education and by 15 local directorates of education. Five of these directorates are in areas occupied by the Israelis.

Elementary education normally begins at the age of seven and lasts six years. It is followed by three years at the «preparatory» stage, so providing nine years of compulsory education. Beyond this stage education depends on ability and the passing of public examinations. Those who pass this examination usually undertake a further three years of sec-

ondary education. This can be followed by a period of higher secondary education.

The main university in Jordan is the University of Jordan. It is located at Jubaiha, near Amman.

In 1976 Jordan's second university, Yarmuk University, at Irbid, was due to receive its first students.

Monetary and banking system

The unit of currency is the Jordanian Dinar, divided into 1,000 fils.

The Central Bank of Jordan began operations in 1964 with a capital of one million dinars. The Central Bank has the sole right to issue currency, to buy and sell gold and foreign exchange, to supervise the banking institutions and to engage in open market operations.

The banking system is composed of the Central Bank, 10 commercial banks and six specialized credit institutions (1973).

Major Commercial Banks and Credit Institutions:

Agricultural Credit Corporation, Arab Bank Ltd., Bank of Jordan Ltd., Cairo Amman Bank, Industrial Development Bank, Jordan National Bank S.A.

British Bank of the Middle East, National and Grindlays Bank, Rafidain Bank.

Agriculture

Agriculture forms the largest productive sector in the Jordanian economy. It employs about 40 per cent of the total work force and contributes between 18 and 25 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product.

Most cereal production in Jordan is carried out without irrigation, but in the Jordan Valley and around the larger towns and villages irrigation is of growing importance.

Main crop production: Wheat, Barley, Lentils, Tomatoes, Water melon and sweet melon, Olives, Grapes.

Main livestock: Sheep and goats, cattle and camels.

Mines

The major minerals produced in Jordan are phosphates and cement. Phosphate production, mainly from Hasa, reached 1.08 million tons in 1973 and 1.35 million tons in 1975. Within the next year or so production is expected to reach 5 million tons per annum. Cement production in 1973 was 617,000 tons. About 16,000 tons of salt is also produced.

Industries

The major industrial centre in Jordan is the Amman-Zarqa region.

The major manufacturing categories are textile, clothing and leather; food, beverages and tobacco; chemicals and plastics; paper and paper products, and fabricated metal products.

Communications

Roads

Jordan is served by an excellent system of metalled roads linking all the major population centres. In the north-eastern part of the country even relatively small villages are connected by all weather roads.

A special permission is required to travel on the new south-bound road to Aqaba.

Railway

The only railway crossing Jordan is part of the old Hedjaz railway linking Damascus and Medina. It enters Jordan from Syria north of Mafraq and then goes southwards via Amman, Qatrana and Ma'an to the terminus at Naqb Ishtar. In the 1960s it had been hoped to rebuild the Hedjaz line to Medina and work actually began, but it has now ceased owing to doubts about the profitability of the line. A new extension has been completed in 1983 until

the port of Aqaba to facilitate the export of phosphates. This will also permit imports to be transported northwards to Amman.

Ports and shipping

Aqaba on the Gulf of Aqaba is the only port of Jordan and, therefore, is of crucial importance. In 1973 Aqaba handled 1,245,000 tons of freight. The export trade amounted to 810,000 tons, made up mostly of phosphate.

Airlines

There is a government-owned airline: Alia (The Royal Jordanian Airline) which operates services to Western Europe, United States and the Far East. Jordan World Airlines and Arab Wings are subsidiaries of Alia.

Amman has an airport of international standard.

A new airport was opened at Aqaba in 1972 and in 1983 the new International Airport of Amman was officially opened to the service.



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